

Inflammatory arthritis may negatively affect intimate relationships and sexual function

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A systematic review and analysis of published studies found consistent links between inflammatory arthritis and impacts on intimacy and sexual function for both men and women. The *Arthritis Care & Research* analysis included 55 studies.

People living with inflammatory arthritis demonstrated a higher prevalence of sexual dysfunction compared with other individuals. For both genders, disease-related factors—including pain, fatigue, and mobility restrictions—contributed to sexual dysfunction and reduced sexual desire.

Erectile dysfunction in men largely accounted for sexual dysfunction, while females experienced pressure to continue [intimate relationships](#) despite their sexual dysfunction, which caused stress in relationships for some people.

"Sexual health and positive relationships are key factors in a person's general sense of wellbeing, yet these issues are not routinely dealt with in practice. Our data suggest that consideration of the impact of inflammatory arthritis on sexual health and intimacy may be important for the holistic management of people with [inflammatory arthritis](#)," said senior author Dr. Andrew Briggs, of Curtin University, in Australia.

More information: Stephanie J W Shoop-Worrall et al, Comparing Proxy, Adolescent and Adult Assessments of Functional Ability in Adolescents with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, *Arthritis Care & Research*

(2019). [DOI: 10.1002/acr.23877](https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.23877)

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