CVD risk factors tied to disease activity, disability in RA

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(HealthDay)—Cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors alone, or in

combination, are associated with higher disease activity and disability in rheumatoid arthritis (RA), according to a study recently published in *Therapeutic Advances in Musculoskeletal Disease*.

Kangping Cui, M.D., from the University of Toronto, and colleagues used data from the Ontario Best Practices Research Initiative RA registry to examine whether CVD risk factors alone are associated with RA disease activity and disability. The analysis included data for 2,033 patients.

The researchers found that 50 percent of patients had at least one CVD risk factor, even in the absence of established CVD. There was an independent association between the presence of at least one CVD risk factor and higher scores on the Clinical Disease Activity Index (β coefficient, 1.59; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.29 to 2.90; P = 0.02), Disease Activity Score 28 (β coefficient, 0.20; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.06 to 0.34; P = 0.01) and Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Index (β coefficient, 0.15; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.08 to 0.22; P

"In summary, we identified the presence of CVD risk factors to be associated with higher disease activity and disability," the authors write. "This knowledge can help practicing rheumatologists identify at-risk patients who may benefit from closer follow up or tailored therapeutic strategies, according to their CVD status."

More information: Abstract/Full Text