

Prevalence of multimorbidity up in rheumatoid arthritis

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Patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) have an increased prevalence of

multimorbidity, according to a study recently published in *RMD Open*.

Cynthia S. Crowson, Ph.D., from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and colleagues examined the comorbidity burden in [patients](#) with RA in a population-based study. The prevalence of 44 previously defined morbidities and 78 nonoverlapping chronic disease categories was compared in residents of eight Minnesota counties with prevalent RA and in age-, sex-, and county-matched non-RA comparators (1,643 patients with RA and 1,643 non-RA individuals).

The researchers found that multimorbidity, defined as two or more morbidities, was present in 86 and 71 percent of RA and non-RA individuals, respectively, with five or more morbidities present in 55 and 38 percent of those with RA and non-RA participants, respectively. Compared with non-RA participants, patients with RA had significantly higher prevalence of 24 of the 44 morbidities, especially [interstitial lung disease](#), fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, and osteoporosis. Seven of the additional 78 categories were significantly higher in RA patients than non-RA participants, including organic sleep disorders, vitamin D deficiency, and foot ulcers.

"The majority of patients with RA are dealing with multiple [chronic conditions](#)," the authors write. "These conditions impart a substantial burden of health care concerns and make health care decision-making more challenging than in patients without RA."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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