Gene variant tied to risk for interstitial lung disease in RA

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(HealthDay)—For patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), the *MUC5B* variant is associated with an increased risk for RA-associated interstitial lung disease (ILD), according to a study published online Aug. 3 in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*.

Antti Palomäki, M.D., from Turku University Hospital in Finland, and colleagues identified patients with RA and ILD from the Finnish national hospital discharge, medication reimbursement, and cause-of-death registries. Lifetime risks for ILD were estimated by age 80 years with respect to the common variant rs35705950 *MUC5B* promoter variant.

The researchers found that 1,965 of 293,972 individuals (0.7 percent) developed ILD by age 80 years. *MUC5B* increased the risk for ILD among all individuals in the dataset, with a hazard ratio of 2.44. Overall, 3.6 percent of the 6,869 patients diagnosed with RA developed ILD. *MUC5B* was a strong risk factor for ILD in patients with RA, with a hazard ratio of 2.27, similar to that of the full dataset. Lifetime risks for ILD were 16.8 and 6.1 percent for *MUC5B* carriers and *MUC5B* noncarriers, respectively, among patients with RA. The difference between risks was seen starting at age 65 years; risk was higher for men.

"This study demonstrates the potential of genomics for risk stratification of RA-ILD and highlights the importance of genetic predisposition on the development of RA-ILD," the authors write.

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More information: Abstract/Full Text