

# What is Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)?

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**nras**  
National Rheumatoid  
Arthritis Society

Changing Minds, Changing Services,  
Changing Lives for people with RA and JIA

Rheumatoid arthritis is very different to Osteoarthritis (OA) – **RA strikes at ANY age**

RA is a **systemic autoimmune disease that attacks the joints and can cause irreversible damage which can lead to disability**

Typical symptoms are joint stiffness, swelling, extreme pain and fatigue affecting one's ability to carry out normal everyday tasks

**It can also affect organs including the heart, lungs and eyes**

It can strike at any age, most commonly between the ages of 40-60, affecting nearly 3 times more women than men. There are in excess of 400,000 people in the UK with RA

**It is a progressive, chronic disease for which there is currently no cure**

NRAS is the only UK patient led charity specifically focussed on RA