

Osteoarthritis just as severe as rheumatoid arthritis

9 June 2016

The results of a study presented today at the European League Against Rheumatism Annual Congress (EULAR 2016) showed patients with osteoarthritis (OA) are more likely to have the impact of their condition underestimated by rheumatologists than patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA).

Provided by European League Against Rheumatism

"This discordance between physician and patient perception of [disease severity](#) is important because of the [negative impact](#) it can have on shared decisions concerning the best choice of therapy," said lead author Dr Isabel Castrejón from the Rush University Medical Centre, Chicago, United States. "This in turn is likely to interfere with treatment compliance and future outcomes," Dr Castrejón explained.

Previous studies have shown that physicians and their [patients](#) with various rheumatic conditions, including RA, tend to rate the impact of the disease very differently. , Although recent evidence suggests similar disease burdens in both OA and RA, OA is still generally regarded as being less severe than RA. ,

In this new study, patient perception of disease severity was greater than physician assessment (by two Units or more) in one third of 243 OA patients and one fifth of 216 RA patients. The assessments of severity were equivalent in just over one half of OA and two thirds of RA patients. Physician evaluation of severity was greater than patient assessment (by two Units or more) in 10% of OA and 15% of RA patients. Physician and patient evaluation of disease severity are both based on a 0-10 visual analogue scale; patient assessment included completion of a multidimensional health assessment questionnaire, with scores for physical function, pain and fatigue, a symptom checklist, and a self-reported joint count.

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