

Common rheumatic diseases

OSTEOARTHRITIS is one of the most common types of arthritis. It affects the cartilage, which cushions the ends of the bones. Gradually the cartilage thins and may even break down, leaving the ends of the bone unprotected. Osteoarthritis occurs most commonly in the fingers and weight bearing joints, including the knees, feet, hips and back.

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS is a disease that causes inflammation of the joints, usually in the hands, feet and knees. The exact cause is unknown. The resulting inflammation leads to swelling, pain and stiffness in multiple joints simultaneously. In the long term if this is left untreated it can lead to damage and deformity of the joint.

OSTEOPOROSIS is a common disease in which bones become thin and can break more easily. To prevent osteoporosis and improve the strength of your bones it is important to make sure you get enough calcium and Vitamin D. It is also important to do regular weight bearing exercise, such as walking.

Rheumatologists are experts in managing these and other autoimmune and connective tissue diseases such as systemic lupus erythematosus, scleroderma, inflammatory myositis and vasculitis.

For more information see

www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

Support research into arthritis and other musculoskeletal disorders

The Australian Rheumatology Association Research Trust welcomes donations and bequests to help support arthritis research in Australia. For more information about the Trust or to make a donation please call (02) 9256 5458 or email **robynm@racp.org.au**

WHERE DO I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

This brochure provides answers to some of the commonly asked questions. If you would like further information please speak with your rheumatologist.

If you wish to find a rheumatologist in your local area, consult the directory on the Australian Rheumatology Association web site:

<http://www.rheumatology.org.au>

For more general information about arthritis and related diseases contact the Arthritis Foundation.

National
Ph: (02) 9552 6078
www.arthritisfoundation.com.au

Australian Capital Territory
Ph: (02) 96288 4244
email: arthritisect@bigblue.net.au

New South Wales
Ph: (02) 9683 1622
www.arthritisnsw.org.au

Northern Territory
Ph: (08) 9683 1622
www.aont.org.au

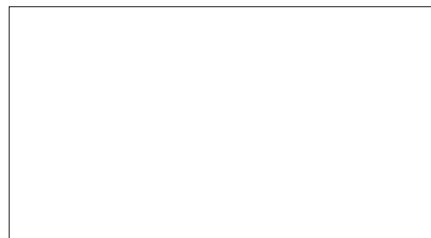
Queensland
Ph: (07) 3857 4200
www.arthritis.org.au

South Australia
Ph: (08) 8379 5711
www.arthritis.sa.org.au

Tasmania
Ph: (03) 6231 2988
www.arthritistasmania.com.au

Victoria
Ph: (03) 8531 8000
www.arthritisvic.org.au

Western Australia
Ph: (08) 9388 2199
www.arthritiswa.org.au



WHAT IS A RHEUMATOLOGIST

THIS BROCHURE
HAS BEEN PRODUCED TO HELP
EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF YOUR
RHEUMATOLOGIST
IN TREATING YOUR CONDITION
AND MANAGING YOUR
ONGOING CARE.

