



Prevalence and cross-sectional associations of neuropathic-like pain features in rheumatoid arthritis

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Background

- Pain control in RA is often inadequate and clinically significant pain persists in a substantial proportion of patients, even when inflammation appears to be well controlled.
- This suggests that inflammation or subsequent joint damage might not be the only factor causing pain in RA.
- Accumulating evidence suggests that features of neuropathic pain (NP) may also be present in patients with rheumatic pain.

Objectives

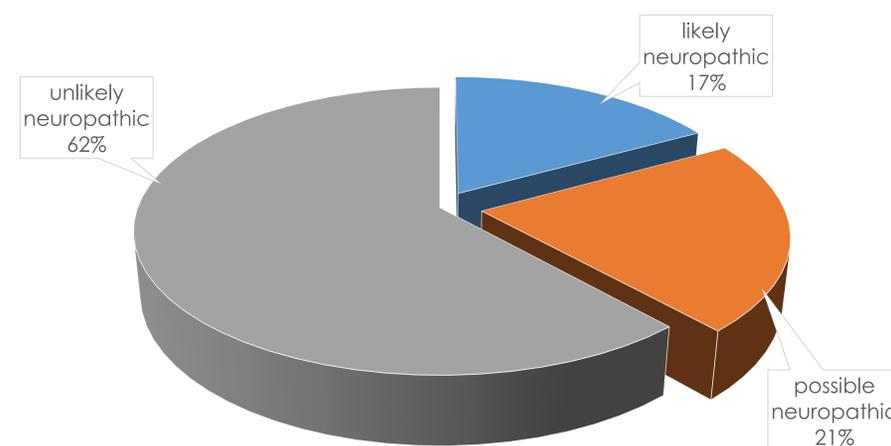
- To estimate the prevalence and factors associated with neuropathic-like pain symptoms in patients with RA.

Methods

- Cross-sectional sample of 159 RA patients.
- Patients completed the painDETECT to screen for NP before visiting the outpatient clinic along with other questionnaires.
- Clinical assessments of disease activity were performed at the outpatient clinic.

Results

- 88% of patients were in DAS28 remission or low disease activity.
- 44% of the patients continued to report clinically significant pain (≥ 4 on the 0-10 NRS).



- According to the painDETECT, 17.0% of patients had likely neuropathic pain and 21.4% possible neuropathic pain.
- Patients with possible or likely NP:
 - had more severe pain;
 - more often met the ACR 2010 criteria for fibromyalgia;
 - more often use analgesics;
 - had more tender joints;
 - had worse physical and mental health status as measured by the SF-36.

- In multivariable analysis, physical and mental health status remained significantly associated with neuropathic pain features, even after controlling for pain severity.

Conclusions

- Neuropathic-like pain symptoms are present in a substantial number of patients with RA.
- Neuropathic-like symptoms are associated with worse physical and mental health.
- The findings underscore the need for further research and screening of pain mechanisms in RA patients.

Multivariable associations with neuropathic-like pain symptoms (painDETECT ≥ 13)

	OR (95% CI)	P
FM survey criteria	1.73 (0.53–5.60)	0.360
Current pain medic.	2.24 (0.98–5.15)	0.056
CRP	0.99 (0.94–1.05)	0.816
Number of TJC	0.96 (0.84–1.09)	0.508
SF-36 PCS	0.90 (0.86–0.95)	<0.001
SF-36 MCS	0.96 (0.92–0.99)	0.021