

DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS
DIVISION OF PEDIATRIC RHEUMATOLOGY



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Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA)



Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) consists of a group of childhood chronic (long term) arthritis including what has been formerly called Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA) and Juvenile Chronic Arthritis (JCA).

It now also includes other forms of chronic childhood arthritis such as psoriatic arthritis, enthesitis-related arthritis and undifferentiated arthritis.

JIA is an autoimmune disease, which is defined by the presence of arthritis for at least six weeks in a child less than 17 years of age.

Arthritis is joint inflammation, which may cause joint swelling, pain and/or stiffness.

JIA is the most common cause of chronic arthritis in children and affects children worldwide, with no racial predilection.

Approximately 1/1,000 children, or more than 300,000 children in the U.S. have JIA. Although children of all ages may get JIA, it is rare before six months of age.

Arthritis may affect any joint, even your jaw and spine.

JIA may be categorized into several subtypes, some of which may be associated with other diseases, which may affect the eyes or gastrointestinal tract, for example.

Although there are several sub-types of JIA, all patients are affected by chronic arthritis.

The severity of arthritis is variable, and patients may have an unpredictable flare (worsening) of their arthritis. Sometimes this flare may relate to the weather, viral infections or inactivity.

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