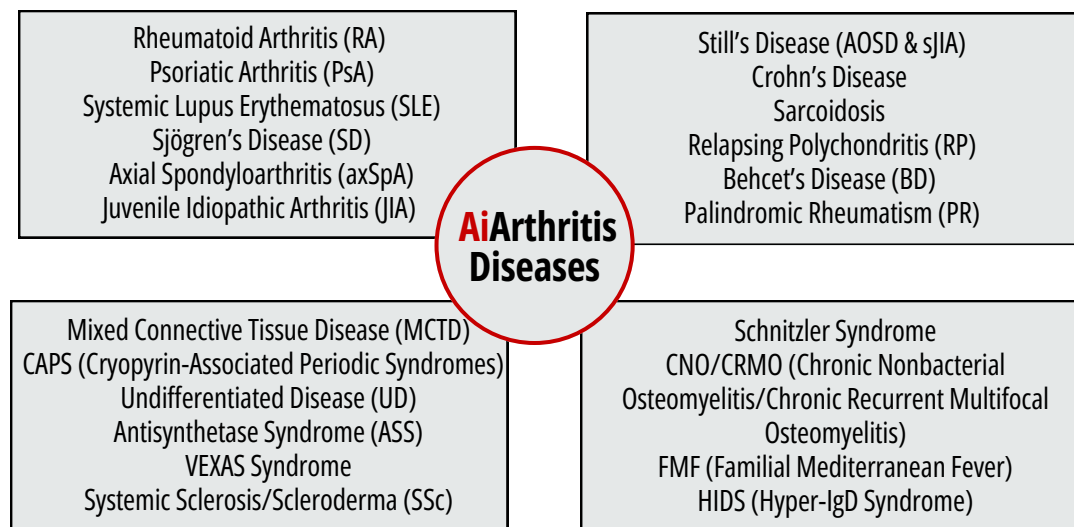


What Are **Ai**Arthritis Diseases?

There are over 100 “auto” diseases, but not all include both “auto” and inflammatory arthritis.

AiArthritis refers to inflammation-driven arthritis linked to **autoimmune** and **autoinflammatory** diseases, where the immune system mistakenly attacks the body’s healthy tissues. These diseases affect not only the joints but also the entire body, including organs and tissues, due to systemic inflammation. Autoimmune diseases, involving the adaptive immune system, are influenced by genetic and environmental factors, while autoinflammatory diseases result from innate immune system reactions, often driven by genetic mutations.

Over 300 million people worldwide are diagnosed with AiArthritis diseases, but the true number may be closer to 450 million due to undiagnosed or undifferentiated cases.



“Don’t second guess yourself. If you are second guessing your symptoms or if you are in a flare you are probably in a flare. Don’t wait to take a medication or use assistive tools.”

-Brittany M (AiArthritis Volunteer, Person Living with Psoriatic Arthritis)

**WORDS FROM A FELLOW
AiARTHRITIS PATIENT**

Typical “Auto” Symptoms



Inflammatory Arthritis Symptoms



Common in All AiArthritis Diseases



Severe fatigue that isn’t alleviated by rest or stimulants.



Brain fog: also known as cognitive dysfunction, making it difficult to think or concentrate.



Flu-like symptoms without having the flu, including nausea, muscle weakness, and malaise.



Fever: Low-grade in autoimmune diseases (except juvenile idiopathic arthritis), higher in autoinflammatory.



Severe joint stiffness, especially in the morning or after long periods of inactivity. Episodes of joint pain that may last hours to weeks and can shift locations (“jumping pain”).



Inflammatory Arthritis symptoms often coincide with “Auto” symptoms and can flare up suddenly without a clear cause.



Flares: Periods of worsening symptoms that can last hours, days, weeks, or months.



Improvement with Activity: Symptoms improve with exercise and worsen with rest.



Comorbidities: Uncontrolled inflammation can lead to comorbidities, with 70% of patients developing additional diagnoses.



Family history: Autoimmune diseases often run in families due to genetic predisposition, while autoinflammatory diseases result from gene mutations that can be inherited and cause disease.

Familial Mediterranean Fever (FMF)

Familial Mediterranean Fever (FMF) is a genetic disorder that causes repeated episodes of pain and inflammation in the abdomen, chest, joints, and skin, along with fever. It mostly affects people from Mediterranean backgrounds, such as Arab, Armenian, Turkish, and Sephardic Jewish populations.

FMF comes in two types:

- **FMF Type 1:** Causes recurring inflammation and symptoms like fever, abdominal pain, chest pain, and joint pain. If not treated, it can lead to kidney problems due to a buildup of a protein called amyloidosis.
- **FMF Type 2:** The main symptom is amyloidosis, even if other FMF symptoms aren't present



Symptoms Often Associated with Familial Mediterranean Fever

These symptoms are in addition to those common in all AiArthritis diseases



Abdominal pain



Testicular pain



Skin rash, usually on the legs, which looks like erysipelas (a skin infection)



Amyloidosis: protein buildup that can harm the kidneys



Muscle pain and weakness



Lung or heart inflammation and chest pain



Diagnosing Familial Mediterranean Fever



Diagnosis involves a mix of physical exams, blood tests, and reviewing family history



Genetic testing for MEFV mutation, but absence of mutation does not completely rule out FMF



Clinical response to the medication colchicine (and others like it) is often used as a diagnostic tool



The Tel-Hashomer criteria are also used to aid in diagnosis. Patients must meet more than one major criteria or more than two minor criteria.



Origin of Familial Mediterranean Fever

FMF was first described in the early 20th century, observed in populations around the Mediterranean Sea, particularly Armenians, Sephardic Jews, and Turks. The name reflects its geographic and genetic prevalence in families of Mediterranean origin, where it presents as periodic fevers and inflammation.



AiArthritis Disease Treatment Options



Familial Mediterranean Fever (FMF) Webpage



Patient Journey Resources