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Supplementary Material



Public Awareness of Rheumatoid Arthritis and Ankylosing Spondylitis in Lebanon

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Supportive/Supplementary Material 1. Interview survey questionnaire.

1. Which specialties you visited in the last 12 months? (Multiple answer allowed)	
1. Internal Medicine specialist	2. GP / Family Medicine
3. cardiologist	4. Endocrinologist and Diabetologist
5. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon	6. Orthopedists
7. Endocrinologist	8. Rheumatologist
9. Neurologist	10. Gynecologist
11. Didn't visit any specialty / doctor	12. Others: Please Specify

2. Have you ever heard of RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS disease?	3. If yes, how do you know about it? (More than 1 answer)
1- Yes 2- No (Skip to 4)	1. I Suffer from RA 2. A member of my close family suffers from Rheumatoid Arthritis 3. I read about it / My friends told me about it 4. I heard about it but I don't know exactly what it is 5. My doctor warned me about it since I have the risk factors that can lead to suffer from RA 6. Others: Please specify

FOR ALL: DESCRIPTION: (Enumerator To read the description for all):
Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease that is characterized generally by pain, stiffness, inflammation, swelling, and sometimes destruction of joints, especially the hands, knees and ankles.

4. After I described to you what it is, how much do you know about this disease? On a 3- point scale; where 3 is very much and 1 not at all		
1- I don't know about the disease	2- I know little about the disease	3- I know very much about the disease

5. In your opinion, do you believe that Rheumatoid Arthritis can be a <u>severe</u> disease and should be treated <u>urgently</u> ?		
1- Yes	2- NO	3- Don't know

6. Up to your knowledge, RA can occur in: (More than 1 answer)			
1. Elderly people, more than 65 years old			
2. Middle age people, between 45 and 65 old			
3. People aged from 18-45 years old			
4. Children under 18 years old			

7. In your opinion, Rheumatoid Arthritis... (Read Options and check all that apply)			
a. Is a chronic auto immune disease	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
b. Is a Hereditary Disease.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
c. Can cause other chronic diseases.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
d. Can be a disabling disease	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know

8. Who do you think is the treating physician for Rheumatoid arthritis (Do not read options, Only 1 answer)			
1. GP / Internal medicine / Family Medicine Cardiologist			
2. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon			
3. Orthopedists / Orthopedics surgeon Endocrinologist			
4. Rheumatologist			
5. Gastroenterologist			
6. Other: Specify:			

9. In your opinion, the below risk factors can cause RA ? (Enumerator to read each statement)			
a. Gender: Both Genders can develop RA but Women are more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
b. Age: Rheumatoid arthritis can occur at any age, but it most commonly begins in middle age.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
c. Family history: If a member of the family has rheumatoid arthritis, it may have an increased risk of the disease.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
d. Smoking: Cigarette smoking increases the risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
e. Obesity: People who are overweight or obese appear to be at a higher risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
f. Previous joint injury or Previous infection: People who have injured a joint or had an infection are more likely to eventually develop arthritis in that joint.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
g. Difficult conditions / working status: Types of jobs that need to be standing or walking all the time i.e.: Nurse / Doctor, Labor...	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know

10. Based on your general knowledge of the disease, can you please tell if you are aware these could be signs and symptoms or not (Read options)			
a. Tender, warm, swollen joints	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
b. Joint Pain	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
c. Joint Stiffness	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
d. Tiredness and lack of energy / Chronic Fatigue	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
e. Loss of function and mobility	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
f. Increase in Sweating	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
g. Back pain	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
h. Unsteadiness when walking / weakness in knee	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
i. Minor Fever	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
j. Weight loss / Loss of appetite	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
k. Dry eyes & dry mouth	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know

11. Based on your general knowledge to what extent are you aware or not aware of the following....?		
a. People with RA might have high risk in developing heart-disease or diabetes	1. Not aware	2. Aware
b. RA patient can feel numbness, tingling, burning and itching in the palm.	1. Not aware	2. Aware

c. RA patient can face Sleeping issue / Depression and Anxiety	1. Not aware	2. Aware
d. RA patient can develop bumps and nodules under the skin	1. Not aware	2. Aware
e. RA can cause bone thinning and Osteoporosis	1. Not aware	2. Aware
f. RA patient can suffer from Joint damages that might require a surgery	1. Not aware	2. Aware
g. RA patient can face skin complications	1. Not aware	2. Aware
h. RA patient have a higher risk to develop CANCER	1. Not aware	2. Aware
i. RA patient can have inflammation in other areas of the body.	1. Not aware	2. Aware
j. RA patient is risked to infection more than other people without RA	1. Not aware	2. Aware
k. RA patient might suffer from Anemia	1. Not aware	2. Aware
l. RA can lead to bone erosion and joint deformity.	1. Not aware	2. Aware

12. I am going to read out the RA treatments, please do tell me if you are aware of these treatments or not? Are you aware that :			
a. There are many medications options now available for the treatment of RA	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
b. Physical Therapy is also part of the treatment paradigm	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know
c. Surgery might be needed in some cases	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't Know

13. Based on your general knowledge, please can you tell me if you agree or disagree on the			
a. Usually RA requires a long- term treatment/ for the rest of life	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
b. RA can be cured at the end	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
c. The joints damage caused by RA is irreversible	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
d. The treatment will stop the progression of the disease	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
e. A healthy diet, proper rest, and regular exercise can help improve the quality of life for RA patients	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
f. RA disease progression can be stopped or prevented if diagnosed and treated early	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
g. If uncontrolled disease, patients with RA might die earlier than general population	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know

Ankylosing Spondylitis:

14. Have you heard of Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) disease?	15. If yes, how do you know about it? (Multiple Answer)
1- Yes 2- No (Skip to 18)	1. I Suffer from AS 2. One of close family member suffers from AS 3. I read about it /My friends told me about it 4. I heard about it but I don't know exactly what it is 5. My doctor warned me about it since I have the risk factors that can lead to suffer from AS 6. Others: Please specify

FOR ALL: DESCRIPTION: (Enumerator To read the description for all):
Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) is a type of arthritis that causes pain and stiffness in your spine, it may lead to the fusion of vertebrae and by this the spine loses its flexibility

16. After I described to you what it is, how much do you know about this disease? On a 3-point scale; where 3 is very much and 1 not at all)		
1- I don't know about the disease	2- I know little about the disease	3- I know very much about the disease

17. In your opinion, do you believe that Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) can be a severe disease and should be treated urgently?		
1- Yes	2- NO	3- Don't know

18. In your opinion, in general, at what age can AS occur? (more than one option)			
1. Elderly People, more than 65 years old			
2. Middle age people, between 45 & 65 years old			
3. People aged from 18 & 45 years old			
4. Children under 18 years old			

19. In your opinion, AS... (Read Options and check all that apply)			
a. Symptoms can affect in addition to the spine, the eyes, the skin, the gastrointestinal tract and peripheral joints	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
b. Can start the teen years and early twenties.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
c. Is a Hereditary Disease.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
d. Is a chronic progressive autoimmune disease	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

20. Who do you think is the treating physician for rheumatic diseases such as AS? (Do not read options, Only 1 answer)			
1. GP / Internal medicine / Family Medicine 2- Cardiologist			
2. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon			
3. Orthopedists / Orthopedics surgeon 5- Endocrinologist			
4. Rheumatologist			
5. Gastroenterologist			
6. Other: Specify			

21. In your opinion, the risk factors below can cause AS ? (Enumerator to read options)			
a. Gender: Both Genders can develop AS but Men are more likely to develop AS.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
b. Family history: If a member of the family has AS, it may have an increased risk of the disease.	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
c. Obesity: People who are overweight or obese appear to be at a higher risk of developing AS	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
d. Smoking: Cigarette smoking increases risk of developing AS	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

22. Based on your general knowledge of the disease, can you please tell if you are aware these could be signs and symptoms or not (Read options)			
a. Low Back Pain	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
b. Gastro-intestinal symptoms	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
c. Tiredness and loss of productivity / Chronic Fatigue	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
d. Osteoporosis	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
e. Pain or swelling in other joints, including your hips, knees, ankles, feet, hands, wrists, elbows, and shoulders	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
f. Psoriasis Skin Rash	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
g. Swelling in toes and fingers	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
h. Swelling, pain or redness in part of an eye	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

23. Based on your general knowledge do you know that, AS patient might also have...? (Read options)			
a. Heart Problems / heart disease	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
b. Diabetes	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
c. Hypertension	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
d. Osteoporosis	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
e. Inflammatory Bowel Disease	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

24. Based on your general knowledge, to what extent are you aware or not aware of the following...?		
a. AS can cause bone thinning and Osteoporosis	1. Not aware	2. Aware
b. AS patient can suffer from spine damages that leads to a totally blocked spine	1. Not aware	2. Aware
c. AS patient can face skin complications i.e.: Psoriasis	1. Not aware	2. Aware

d. AS patient can have inflammation in other areas of the body	1. Not aware	2. Aware
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25. I am going to read out the RA treatments, please do tell me if you aware of these treatments or not? Are you aware of the available treatments			
e. There are many medications options now available for the treatment of AS	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
a. Physical Therapy is also part of the treatment paradigm	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know
b. Surgery might be needed in some cases	1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

26. Based on your general knowledge, please can you tell me if you agree or disagree on the following...?			
a. Usually AS requires a long-term treatment/ for the rest of life	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
b. AS can be cured at the end	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
c. The patient might require a surgery at a certain point	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
d. The treatment should start as early as possible to prevent irreversible joint	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
e. Treatment will not lead to cure, but it will improve	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
f. The treatment must be accompanied with exercise	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
g. A healthy diet and regular exercise can help improve the quality of life for AS	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
h. AS can be controlled if diagnosed and treated early	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know
i. Without effective treatment the patient might lose his	1. Agree	2. Disagree	3. Don't know

27. Do you feel it is important to raise public awareness on RA and AS? (On a scale of 4, where 1 is not important and 4 is very important)			
1. Not Important	2. Neither Important nor not important	3. Somewhat Important	4. Very Important

28. In your opinion, what is the most effective way of communicating awareness?		
1. TV	2. Radio	3. Social media
4. Websites	5. Billboards	6. Brochures
7. Phone messages	8. Doctors' clinics	9. Other specify:

29. If one of the answers is social media, can you please specify which channel would be the most effective to share awareness through it		
1. Facebook	2. Twitter	3. Instagram
4. Linked in	5. Youtube	

30. Are you willing to attend any awareness session related to RA or AS if you are notified about?		
1. Yes	2. No	3. Don't know

QUESTIONS ONLY FOR RA Patients (This section should only be asked for those who answered 1 in question 4)

31. Since how many months/years are you diagnosed with RA?	
Months:	
Years:	

32. What led you to seek advice from a healthcare professional? (Multiple Choice)	
1. I always suffered from severe pain in my Lower Back pain	2. I wasn't able to perform daily activities/sports/exercises
3. I had a general weakness and exhaustion that made me loose productivity	4. I couldn't walk properly
5. I couldn't get up easily in the mornings/I suffered from joint stiffness in the mornings	6. My flexibility was limited and I lost strength

7. I couldn't sleep well, I had trouble sleeping	8. I lost weight/lost appetite dramatically
9. I was doing my routine examination and checkup	10. Others: Please specify

33. Which specialty did you visit first when you felt the signs and symptoms?	34. After diagnosis, which specialty do you follow up with?
1. GP / Internal medicine / Family Medicine 2. Cardiologist 3. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon 4. Orthopedists / Orthopedics surgeon 5. Endocrinologist 6. Rheumatologist 7. Gastroenterologist 8. Other: Specify	1. GP / Internal medicine /Family Medicine 2. Cardiologist 3. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon 4. Orthopedists / Orthopedics surgeon 5. Endocrinologist 6. Rheumatologist 7. Gastroenterologist 8. Other: Specify

35. What did you change in your lifestyle routine? (Multiple Answer)	
1. I quit smoking	2. I took care of my food and follow a special diet
3. I do regular moderate exercises	4. I take more time to rest and relax
5. I limited my alcohol intake	6. I take more vitamins
7. I didn't change anything	8. Others: Please specify

QUESTIONS ONLY FOR AS Patients (This section should only be asked for those who answered 1 in question 18)

36. Since how many months/years are you diagnosed with AS?
Months:
Years:

37. What led you to seek advice from a healthcare professional? (Multiple Choice)	
1. I always suffered from severe pain in my joints / Low Back pain	2. I couldn't walk properly
3. I had a general weakness and exhaustion that made me loose productivity	4. I suffered from a severe gastro pain
5. I couldn't get up easily in the mornings / I suffered from joint stiffness in the mornings	6. I was doing my routine examination and checkup
7. I couldn't see well, I had redness in my eye and blurred vision	8. I wasn't able to perform daily activities / sports / exercises
9. Others: Please specify	

38. Which specialty did you visit first when you felt the signs and symptoms?	39. After diagnosis, which specialty do you follow up with?
1. GP / Internal medicine / Family Medicine 2. Cardiologist 3. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon 4. Orthopedists / orthopedic surgeon 5. Endocrinologist 6. Rheumatologist 7. Gastroenterologist 8. Other: Specify	1. GP / Internal medicine / Family Medicine 2. Cardiologist 3. Vascular Specialist / Surgeon 4. orthopedists / orthopedic surgeon 5. Endocrinologist 6. Rheumatologist 7. Gastroenterologist 8. Other: Specify

40. What did you change in your lifestyle routine? (Multiple Answer)	
1. I quit smoking	2. I took care of my food and follow a special diet
3. I do regular moderate exercises	4. I take more time to rest and relax
5. I limited my alcohol intake	6. I take more vitamins
7. I didn't change anything	8. Others: Please specify