



## BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

October 2021

### How is rheumatoid arthritis related to risk for bipolar disorder?

Rheumatoid arthritis is a common systemic inflammatory disorder primarily affecting synovial joints. Peripheral inflammation can up-regulate neuroinflammation, inducing neurological damage that can affect mood and cognition. Chronic neuroinflammation has been proposed to be a contributory factor in the development of bipolar disorder, with studies demonstrating elevated inflammatory markers in people with bipolar disorder.

### What is the evidence for rheumatoid arthritis as a risk factor for bipolar disorder?

Moderate quality evidence suggests a medium-sized increased risk of bipolar disorder in people with rheumatoid arthritis compared to people without rheumatoid arthritis.



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*NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.*

*Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.*

*Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.*

*While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about bipolar disorder or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.*

For more information see the technical table

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