



# IRA e-bulletin

Newsletter For Health Professionals in Rheumatology

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## Expert Opinion



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### What are the risk factors for PsA? Does smoking have any role?

Like most diseases, genetic and environmental factors underlie susceptibility to psoriatic arthritis. The MHC region of human chromosome 6p carries the gene(s) most important for PsA susceptibility. However, environmental risk factors may be clinically more relevant. Since most patients with PsA develop the disease after onset of cutaneous psoriasis, identifying risk factors for PsA in those with cutaneous psoriasis may help risk reduction or early diagnosis. Studies have shown that injury, rubella vaccination, moving house, lifting cumulative loads of at least 100 pounds/hour, and infections that required antibiotics increased the risk of developing PsA. Smoking is known to increase risk of developing psoriasis. In a cross-sectional study, the prevalence of smoking was lower in PsA patients compared to those with psoriasis alone. However, a longitudinal study showed that smoking is associated with a higher risk of developing PsA. Thus, smoking plays a role in susceptibility to psoriasis and PsA, but the exact relationship is unclear and is a subject of further research.

### References

1. *Ann Rheum Dis.* 2008;67(5):672–676.
2. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken).* 2011;63(8):1091–1097.
3. *Ann Rheum Dis.* 2012;71(6):804–808.

### How common is radiographic progression in early psoriatic arthritis?

Unfortunately, there are not many studies focused on early PsA. A study from an early synovitis clinic showed that in patients presenting to the clinic with mean disease duration of 9.9 months, erosions were present in 27% of patients at baseline and this progressed to 47% at 2 years of follow-up. In my own clinic, about 20% of patients presenting to the clinic with less than 2 years of disease develop new erosions within 2 years.

### Reference

1. *Rheumatology (Oxford).* 2003;42(12):1460–1468.