

Palindromic Rheumatism

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Palindromic rheumatism (PR) is an *attack-wise* rheumatic disease characterized by sudden onset of synovitis. The name is derived from the term “palindrome”, which means a word or a phrase that is spelled the same forward as backward (examples include "mom" or “A Toyota's a Toyota”), to emphasize how the illness begins and ends in a similar way. The disease attack is associated with severe pain, redness, swelling, and disability of one or more joints. The attack time and intercritical interval between attacks are distinctly variable. Strangely, there is no joint damage after attacks. Due to the lack of distinct laboratory marks and clinical symptoms being similar to many other forms of arthritis or other autoimmune diseases, a diagnosis of PR is very difficult. It is often a case of excluding the other conditions before getting the correct diagnosis. Differential diagnosis of PR includes gouty arthritis, atypical rheumatoid arthritis (RA), unspecified seronegative spondylopathy,etc. Blood tests that may be done for differential diagnosis as well as for monitoring of the disease activity include ESR, CRP, CBC et DC, rheumatoid factor, anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide antibodies (ACPA) and so on. PR has been suggested to be an abortive form of RA, since ACPA and antikeratin antibodies (AKA) are present in a high proportion of patients, as is the case in RA. Actually, some investigators regard it as a variant form of RA. However, PR affects men and women equally. Also, PR is one of the presentations for Whipple disease caused by *Tropheryma whipplei*.