



## WE UNDERSTAND RHEUMATOID DISEASE

Millions of us have fought the crippling pain and damage of Rheumatoid Disease with remarkable resilience. We face multiple procedures and harsh treatment side effects with optimism, humor, and compassion.

RD is a serious disease, but symptoms can be visibly subtle, making it difficult to understand. Lack of awareness of RD makes it even more isolating. Too often, even doctors doubt how much RD patients endure.

We understand because we are patients and caregivers who live with RD. Together we will transform the future for everyone diagnosed with the disease.

## TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

### AWARENESS

We provide a more complete understanding of RD to health professionals and the public. Imagine how better comprehension of RD will impact us personally through our relationships, medical care, employment, and insurance.

### SUPPORT

We supply resources to help people thrive with RD because people with RD need the same support as people with diabetes or cancer.

### ADVOCACY

We help people to advocate effectively on their own behalf and for others with RD.

### CURE

We believe a cure for RD will be found and we work toward the day no one suffers from RD.

## ABOUT RPF

RPF is a 501c(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with rheumatoid diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and juvenile arthritis. RPF was founded in 2011 to address a significant lack of disease education, comparatively low levels of research funding, and difficulty obtaining adequate treatment. RPF is committed to creating pathways to better clinical care and disease outcomes through education, awareness, and participation in patient-centered research.

## RPF RESOURCES

Visit us online at <http://rheum4us.org> for more information, to order copies of this and other resources, or to become a Member.

Other brochures available from RPF:

- About RA: What is Rheumatoid Disease?
- Treatment Management for Rheumatoid Disease
- Pregnancy and Family Planning with Rheumatoid Disease
- Treat to Target (T2T) in Rheumatoid Disease
- Methotrexate: The Most Prescribed Treatment for Rheumatoid Disease



# Rheumatoid Patient Foundation

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*RPF uses photographs donated by RD patients in all of its literature. Thanks to those who donated photos for use in this brochure.*



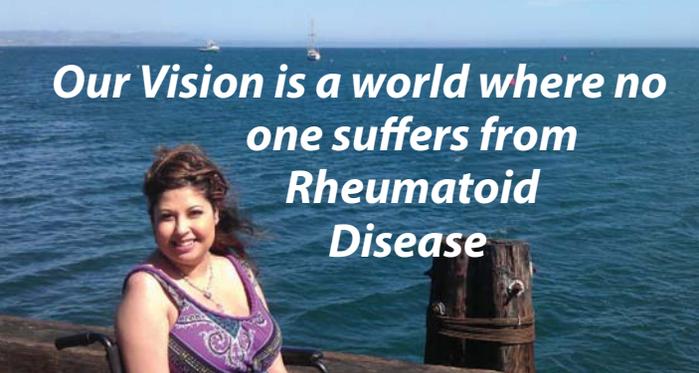
# Rheumatoid Patient Foundation



**Improving the lives of people with Rheumatoid Disease**

[rheum4us.org](http://rheum4us.org)

# Our Vision is a world where no one suffers from Rheumatoid Disease



## WHAT IS RHEUMATOID DISEASE?

Rheumatoid Arthritis, or Rheumatoid Disease (RD), is a progressive inflammatory disease that causes damage to organ and joint tissues, producing pain, disability, and deformity. Mortality is significantly increased especially due to its effects upon the heart and lungs.

Researchers believe it is caused by a malfunction of the immune system, which is an extremely complex system of pathways and triggers. The immune system is triggered to attack the patient's own body as if it were an intruding virus.

## HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE AFFECTED BY RHEUMATOID DISEASE?

Prevalence of RD is usually estimated at one to two percent of the total population worldwide. In 2011, Mayo Clinic estimated that the lifetime risk of RA is 3.6 percent or 1 in 28 for women and 1.7 percent or 1 in 59 for men. Mayo Clinic reports at least 1.5 million Americans live with the disease in the U.S. Incidence is increasing, especially in women.

## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RHEUMATOID DISEASE

*For additional information about Rheumatoid Disease, visit [rawarrior.com](http://rawarrior.com).*



## HOW CAN I HELP?

*Join the Rheumatoid Patient Foundation now at this address:*



<http://rheum4us.org/about/become-a-member/>



## WHAT IS IT LIKE TO LIVE WITH RHEUMATOID DISEASE?

There is variety to the pattern of symptoms that people with RD experience. Sometimes RD attacks only a few joints at a time, allowing a person to adapt to a slight disability. In other people, RD attacks every single joint, requiring drastic lifestyle changes. RD often simultaneously attacks the heart or other organs.

Rheumatoid Disease activity can be classified as mild, moderate, or severe. Patients may experience periodic or constant flare. Common symptoms include: **fatigue, joint pain, stiffness, fever, and swelling.**

Treatment for RD continues for a lifetime, so medications, tests, and doctor visits become an ordinary part of life. A small percentage of people achieve remission with treatment, but most live with pain and fatigue every day. At least one third of patients have no response to medications available today.



## WHY DO WE NEED THE RPF?

The RPF is the only organization with the sole purpose of benefitting people with Rheumatoid Disease. Although patient organizations have existed for various other rheumatological conditions or autoimmune diseases, the RPF is the first non-profit organization just for the millions of people living with RD. We endeavor to explicitly represent the needs of RD patients and to advance research to improve and extend their lives.