



Glossary

>>> Words commonly used to talk about Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis



Word	Meaning
Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA)	A condition in children and adolescents under 16 years that causes inflammation in one or more joints. There are three main types of Juvenile Arthritis: polyarticular, oligoarticular (or pauciarticular) and systemic. “Juvenile” means that it affects young people, “idiopathic” means that we don’t know what causes it, and “arthritis” means inflammation of the joints.
Analgesics	Medications used to reduce pain, such as paracetamol (Panadol). Sometimes called “pain killers” or “pain relievers”.
Ankylosing Spondylitis	A type of arthritis that affects the spine.
Autoimmune condition	A condition such as arthritis in which the immune system gets mixed up between what is foreign and what is a normal part of the body and starts attacking the body itself. In JIA the immune system attacks the tissues in the joints.
Biologic Agents (bDMARDs)	Medications that reduce pain and inflammation by blocking different chemicals involved in the inflammation process. These are newer medications and are only used for arthritis that is not controlled by NSAIDs and other disease modifying drugs.
Cartilage	Connective tissue that covers the ends of bones in a joint.
Corticosteroids (also called Steroids)	Medications that have a powerful anti-inflammatory effect. They are usually used for short periods to relieve inflammation, and they can be injected directly into the joint.
Disease Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drugs (DMARDs)	Medications that reduce the overall activity of the arthritis and slow down the progress of the condition. They reduce the function of the immune system, which is overactive in arthritis. DMARDs are only used if the arthritis is not well controlled by NSAIDs.
Enthesitis-Related Arthritis	A type of JIA which affects joints and entheses (the place where a tendon joins a bone).
Flare (or flare-up)	A period of time when the symptoms of arthritis appear or increase.
Inflammation	A reaction of tissue or joints to injury or disease that shows up as swelling, heat, redness and/or pain.
Joint	The place where two bones meet. Parts of a joint are ligaments, cartilage, synovium and joint space.
Joint Injection	A procedure to decrease inflammation in a joint. A needle is inserted into the joint space to take out excess synovial fluid, and inject long-acting steroid medication into the joint.
Joint Space	The space between bones inside a joint.
Juvenile Arthritis (JA)	Another name for Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA).
Juvenile Chronic Arthritis (JCA)	An old name for JIA.
Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA)	Another old name for JIA.

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Ligament	A flexible band of tissue that connects bones and cartilage and binds joints together.
Non-steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)	Medications used to reduce fever, pain and inflammation.
Occupational Therapist (OT)	A specially trained practitioner who helps children whose arthritis is interfering with important daily activities such as dressing and writing.
Oligoarticular or Pauciarticular JIA	A type of JIA that affects four or less joints.
Ophthalmologist	A doctor who specialises in eye conditions. Some children with JIA need to see an ophthalmologist to check for and manage uveitis.
Orthotist	Orthotists make orthotics – these are devices used to help in the treatment of JIA such as splints, shoe raises and shoe inserts.
Physiotherapist (or Physio)	Physiotherapists are experts in how joints and muscles work. Physiotherapists develop exercises to help keep joints moving well. They give advice on splinting and protective equipment. This can reduce pain and the stress on inflamed joints.
Polyarticular JIA	A type of JIA that affects five or more joints.
Psoriatic JIA	Arthritis that is associated with psoriasis – a skin disease that causes patches of red, scaly skin.
Psychologist	A specialist in helping children and families manage social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and mental health problems like depression and anxiety. They can also help children learn ways to manage pain.
Range of Motion	A measurement of how far a joint can move through all of its normal motions.
Remission	A period of time when the symptoms and signs of JIA disappear.
Rheumatoid Factor (RF)	An antibody found in the blood of some people who have Rheumatoid Arthritis as well as other rheumatic diseases. A blood test can tell whether this is present (RF+) or not (RF-).
Rheumatologist	A doctor who specialises in the treatment of arthritis and other rheumatic diseases.
Rheumatology Nurse	A registered paediatric nurse who specialises in providing education and support and coordinating the care of children with JIA and their families.
Splints	Splints are made of plastic moulded around an arm or leg. They help hold a joint in a good position or support a painful joint so that children can stay active for longer.
Synovial Fluid	A lubricating and protective fluid in a joint, produced by the synovium.
Synovium (or synovial membrane, synovial lining)	The tissue that surrounds and seals the joints. The synovium produces fluid that lubricates and protects the joints.
Systemic Onset JIA	A type of JIA that affects joints and other parts of the body such as the skin or internal organs.
Tendon	Tough, connective tissue that attaches a muscle to a joint.
Uveitis (or Iridocyclitis)	Inflammation of parts of the eye, including the iris, (the coloured bit of the eye) and the ciliary body (the muscles and tissues involved in focusing the eye).