

OSTEOARTHRITIS – INVESTIGATIONS

This Optional Decision Support Tool pertains to the Guideline:
Osteoarthritis in Peripheral Joints – Diagnosis and Treatment
www.BCGuidelines.ca

There are no blood tests to diagnose osteoarthritis. Blood tests are done to rule out other conditions and monitor the disease and/or medications.

Order tests when history and physical findings indicate and consider inflammatory versus non-inflammatory presentations (non-OA or OA respectively)

INVESTIGATIONS TO CONSIDER OF OTHER CONDITIONS SUSPECTED

Blood work

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Hematology profile | Test for chronic or inflammatory condition (baseline to monitor NSAID treatment). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creatinine | Test renal function if considering NSAID use. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ESR | Use when considering rheumatoid condition, multiple myeloma or infection. See guideline: <i>Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate</i> available at www.BCGuidelines.ca |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C-Reactive Protein | Use in septic arthritis diagnosis and to monitor treatment. Selectively consider use when it is important to rule out inflammatory conditions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANA | Use when considering connective tissue disease – see guideline: <i>Antinuclear Antibody (ANA) Testing for Connective Tissue Disease</i> at www.BCGuidelines.ca |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatoid Factor (RF) | Review guideline: <i>Rheumatoid Arthritis – Diagnosis and Management</i> at www.BCGuidelines.ca |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AST | Consider AST (aspartate aminotransferase test) for diagnosing and monitoring liver disease when considering NSAID use. |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Crystals | <input type="checkbox"/> C&S | <input type="checkbox"/> Microscopy |
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DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

X-rays are indicated for persistent unexplained joint pain or in anticipation of orthopaedic/rheumatologic referral. Specify the x-rays are for OA.

- knees – must include standing AP, lateral and skyline.
- hips – specify OA hip series including lateral view of the affected hip and upper 1/3 of femur.