

The Role of Obesity in the Pathogenesis of Rheumatoid Arthritis and Spondyloarthritis

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Abstract: The associations of obesity with cardiovascular diseases and inflammation, as well as the body composition changes has been observed in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients. Obese RA patients seem to have higher disease activity and worse quality of life, but then again lower radiographic progression and joint damage. Limited data available for spondyloarthritis (SpA) has shown that obesity might be associated with increased activity in ankylosing spondylitis, but no clear impact was observed for psoriatic arthritis. Fat tissue functions as an endocrine organ, releasing pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory adipokines, which could stimulate sustained systemic and joint inflammation. The most studied adipokines, such as leptin, adiponectin and visfatin, are also involved in RA immunopathology, hence the role of adipokines in RA and SpA should be further evaluated.

Key words: obesity, rheumatoid arthritis, spondyloarthritis