Effect of Smoking on Connective Tissue Disease

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The use of tobacco is a risk factor for the development of autoimmune disease including rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Smoking is related to the production of anti-citrullinated protein antibodies (ACPA) interacted with certain predisposing genetic factors, especially the HLA DRB1 alleles containing the shared epitope. Moreover, smoking is likely to have an impact on the outcome of other connective tissue diseases, particularly in terms of the activity and the severity of the disease as well as the treatment response. In recent studies, cessation of smoking by active smokers appears to be controversial in altering the activity of the connective tissue disease. However, cessation of tobacco use remains an important issue. In patients with rheumatoid arthritis, each year of cessation of smoking reduces the risk of the occurrence of extra-articular manifestations, particularly bronchopulmonary, with severe infections and increased mortality due to cardiorespiratory problems or a malignancy (such as lung cancer).

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