

Prevalence and severity of periodontitis in patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and the effects of treatment

Submission date 14/07/2017	Recruitment status Recruiting	☒ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 22/08/2017	Overall study status Ongoing	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☐ Results
Last Edited 02/06/2026	Condition category Oral Health	☐ Individual participant data ☒ Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Periodontitis is a chronic inflammatory disease affecting the tissue surrounding the teeth, and if left untreated it may result in bone damage and subsequent tooth loss. The disease is very common worldwide, in Sweden affecting approximately 1/3 of the population. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a lifelong autoimmune disease, where the normally protective immune system attacks the joints, resulting in swelling, stiffness and pain. This incurable disease affects approximately 1% of the world's population, mostly women. Previous studies have shown that patients with RA may have an increased risk of periodontitis in general and that non-surgical periodontal treatment may have beneficial effects on RA disease activity. This study aims to investigate the severity of periodontitis in patients with RA and whether frequent periodontal treatment (every three months) results in the improvement of RA disease activity and periodontal parameters in patients with RA and periodontitis.

Who can participate?

Patients with RA and periodontal disease, ≥ 18

What does the study involve?

Participants receive a dental examination at the beginning of the study. Those with periodontitis will be randomly divided into one of two groups. Those in the first group receive a more frequent periodontal treatment every three months, and those in the second group receive periodontal treatment only at the first visit. The periodontal treatment includes oral hygiene instructions and the removal of plaque and tartar by a dental professional. Patients with severe periodontitis in need of specialist treatment are referred to and treated by a dentist who specializes in periodontal disease/a periodontist.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The main benefits of participating in the study include surveillance and treatment of the periodontal disease performed frequently (every three months) by a dentist. Also, the patients in the control group benefit from conventional periodontal treatment at the inclusion in the study. The side effects of periodontal treatment include sore gums and gum recession due to

reduced inflammation. This is a low-risk study since all the participants receive conventional periodontal treatment during the first visit as well as surveillance of the periodontitis throughout the course of the study.

Where is the study run from?

Karolinska University Hospital (Sweden)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

May 2009 to December 2027

Who is funding the study?

Partly funded by the Stockholm County Council, the collaborative European Union's FP7 Research Project TRIGGER, Karolinska Institutet, the Swedish Research Council, the Swedish Dental Society and others.

Who is the main contact?

1. Associate Professor Tülay Yucel-Lindberg

Tulay.Lindberg@ki.se

2. PhD, DDS, Kaja Eriksson

kaja.eriksson@ki.se

3. PhD, DDS, Carina Fei

carina.fei@ki.se

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

Dr Tülay Yucel-Lindberg

ORCID ID

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0129-8809>

Contact details

Department of Dental Medicine

Division of periodontology

Karolinska Institutet

Stockholm

Sweden

141 04

Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

2009/792-31/4

Study information

Scientific Title

The severity of periodontitis and the effects of periodontal treatment on disease activity of patients with rheumatoid arthritis as well as the influence of medication on periodontitis

Acronym

Periodontitis in RA (PEIRA)

Study objectives

The hypotheses of this study are:

1. Severe form of periodontitis is more common in seropositive (ACPA/RF) patients with RA as compared to seronegative.
2. Frequent periodontal treatment reduces rheumatoid arthritis disease activity, and related autoimmune and inflammatory parameters.
3. The microbial profile differs based on rheumatological and/or periodontal characteristics in patients with RA.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

1. Regional Ethical Review Board Stockholmm, 10/06/2009, ref: Dnr 2009/792-31/4
2. Regional Ethical Review Board Stockholmm, 30/04/2015, ref: 2015/766-32

Primary study design

Interventional

Study design

Exploratory prospective intervention study

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Periodontitis and Rheumatoid Arthritis

Interventions

After a full-mouth dental and periodontal examination, participants with periodontitis are randomized to one of two groups.

Those in the first group receive conventional periodontal treatment only at the time of inclusion into the study (control group).

Those in the second group undergo the periodontal treatment every three months (intervention group) for one year. The conventional periodontal treatment includes oral hygiene instructions, supra- and subgingival scaling and root planning. Patients in need of specialist treatment (e.g. surgical periodontal treatment) are remitted to periodontal clinic.

Participants are assessed for their rheumatoid arthritis activity at baseline and at the study end. Participants are also evaluated for their periodontal parameters such as probing pocket depth, clinical attachment loss, antibodies, microbial profiles and inflammatory mediators.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

1. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) disease activity is measured using the DAS28 score, HAQ score at baseline and one year
2. Periodontal parameters (such as probing pocket depth, clinical attachment loss) are measured using the methods of measurement of periodontal disease/parameters at baseline and months three, six, nine, and twelve

Key secondary outcome(s)

Current secondary outcome measures as of 23/09/2025:

1. The microbial profile is assessed using sequencing technology throughout the study (the specific time points depend on the availability of the resources as well as the instruments at core facility)
2. Antibody levels (such as ACPA/RF, periodontal pathogens etc) are measured using multiplex immunoassay, nephelometry and/or ELISA technique at baseline and one year
3. Levels of inflammatory mediators are measured using Luminex immunoassay at baseline and one year
4. Metabolome profile measured using liquid chromatography–mass spectrometry (LC/MS) at baseline and one year

Previous secondary outcome measures:

1. The microbial profile is assessed using sequencing technology throughout the study (the specific time points depend on the availability of the resources as well as the instruments at core facility)
2. Antibody levels (such as ACPA/RF, periodontal pathogens etc) are measured using multiplex immunoassay, nephelometry and/or ELISA technique at baseline and one year
3. Levels of inflammatory mediators are measured using Luminex immunoassay at baseline and one year

Completion date

31/12/2026

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. ≥18 years of age
2. Fulfilling the 2010 ACR criteria for RA
3. Moderate to severe periodontitis, defined according to the classification criteria of the CDC Working Group meant for usage in Population-Based Surveillance of Periodontitis
4. Written informed consent to participate
5. Swedish national registration number

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

18 Years

Upper age limit

80 Years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

0

Key exclusion criteria

1. Antibiotic treatment ≤ 3 months prior to inclusion into the study
2. Periodontal treatment (surgical or non-surgical) ≤ 3 months prior to inclusion into the study
3. Pregnancy
4. Simultaneous participation in other interventional studies

Date of first enrolment

06/09/2017

Date of final enrolment

31/12/2026

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

Sweden

Study participating centre

Rheumatology Clinics at Karolinska University Hospital (Huddinge and Solna)

141 86 Stockholm (Huddinge)

171 76 Stockholm (Solna)

Stockholm

Sweden

141 86

Sponsor information**Organisation**

Karolinska Institutet

ROR

<https://ror.org/04hmgwg30>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Not defined

Funder Name

Stockholms Läns Landsting

Funder Name

Vetenskapsrådet

Alternative Name(s)

Swedish Research Council, VR

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

Sweden

Funder Name

Swedish Dental Society

Funder Name

Swedish Rheumatic Foundation

Funder Name

Karolinska Institutet

Alternative Name(s)

Karolinska Institute, KI

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Local government

Location

Sweden

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date