Caplan's Syndrome

Caplan's syndrome is a rare disease of the lungs and joints. Basically, it consists of two illnesses affecting one person at the same time - silicosis (lungs) and rheumatoid arthritis (joints). More information about them can be found in the related texts.

Causes

Risk factors for lung disease is work in environment with silica dust (miners) without adequate protection. Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease and the exact cause of its origin is not known.

Symptoms

Pulmonary symptoms manifest by cough and shortness of breath. Joint disease manifests by their swelling, pain and morning stiffness. The disease affects rather small joints, especially the joints of the hands.

Diagnosis

If we confirm positive diagnosis of silicosis and rheumatoid arthritis in one person, we have a clear diagnosis of Caplan's syndrome

Treatment

The therapy includes administration of immunosuppressants such as corticosteroids. Patients should be regularly monitored with repeated chest X-ray examinations. However, before the immunosuppressive drugs are administered, tuberculosis must be excluded. People with Kaplan's syndrome should stop smoking, which improves the symptoms and slows the disease's progression. Further exposure to silica dust must be prevented at all cost.