

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.