

Numbers of people affected by rheumatic diseases in Germany

as of: 10/2023

Musculoskeletal disorders are the most important cause of persistent pain and functional impairment. They affect around 25% of the adult European population. In Germany, this corresponds to around 17 million people.

A. Degenerative and metabolic diseases and pain syndromes of the musculoskeletal system¹

- Approximately 6 million adults suffer from chronic back pain that is severe and leads to disability.
- At least 5 million adults have symptomatic osteoarthritis.
- At least 4 million adults suffer from clinically symptomatic osteoporosis.
- Approximately 950,000 adults suffer from gout.
- Approximately 1.5 million adults suffer from fibromyalgia.

B. Inflammatory rheumatic diseases²

- About 2.6% of the adult population in Germany have an inflammatory rheumatic disease. This corresponds to approximately 1.8 million people.
- The most common forms are rheumatoid arthritis and spondyloarthritis. These include ankylosing spondylitis, undifferentiated or non-radiographic forms, and psoriatic arthritis. Connective tissue diseases and vasculitides are less common.
- Around 20,000 children and adolescents have a chronic inflammatory rheumatic disease. The most common form is juvenile idiopathic arthritis. Less common are connective tissue diseases, primary chronic vasculitis and autoinflammatory syndromes.

The estimated numbers of individuals with inflammatory rheumatic diseases in detail²

- About 700,000 adults have rheumatoid arthritis (0.8%-1.2% of the adult population).
- Approximately 14,000 children and adolescents have juvenile idiopathic arthritis (approximately 0.1% of minors).
- Approximately 350,000 people have ankylosing spondylitis.
- Approximately 200,000 people have psoriatic arthritis.
- Approximately 49,000 (primary Sjögren's syndrome), 39,000 (systemic lupus erythematosus), 15,000 (systemic sclerosis) and 12,000 (idiopathic inflammatory myopathies) people have a connective tissue disease.
- Approximately 69,000 people have polymyalgia rheumatica.
- Approximately 17,000 people have giant cell arteritis and 18,000 have ANCA-associated vasculitis.

References:

[1] Zink A, Albrecht K. [How common are musculoskeletal disorders in Germany?](#) Zeitschrift für Rheumatologie 2016;75(4):346-53.

[2] Albrecht K, Binder S, Minden K et al. [Systematic review to estimate the prevalence of inflammatory rheumatic diseases in Germany.](#) Z Rheumatol. 2024 Feb;83(Suppl 1):20-30. doi: 10.1007/s00393-022-01302-5.