

## OSTEOARTHRITIS – INVESTIGATIONS

This Optional Decision Support Tool pertains to the Guideline:  
*Osteoarthritis in Peripheral Joints – Diagnosis and Treatment*  
[www.BCGuidelines.ca](http://www.BCGuidelines.ca)

**There are no blood tests to diagnose osteoarthritis. Blood tests are done to rule out other conditions and monitor the disease and/or medications.**

Order tests when history and physical findings indicate and consider inflammatory versus non-inflammatory presentations (non-OA or OA respectively)

### INVESTIGATIONS TO CONSIDER OF OTHER CONDITIONS SUSPECTED

#### Blood work

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hematology profile     | Test for chronic or inflammatory condition (baseline to monitor NSAID treatment).  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creatinine             | Test renal function if considering NSAID use.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ESR                    | Use when considering rheumatoid condition, multiple myeloma or infection. See guideline: <i>Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate</i> available at <a href="http://www.BCGuidelines.ca">www.BCGuidelines.ca</a> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C-Reactive Protein     | Use in septic arthritis diagnosis and to monitor treatment. Selectively consider use when it is important to rule out inflammatory conditions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANA                    | Use when considering connective tissue disease – see guideline: <i>Antinuclear Antibody (ANA) Testing for Connective Tissue Disease</i> at <a href="http://www.BCGuidelines.ca">www.BCGuidelines.ca</a>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatoid Factor (RF) | Review guideline: <i>Rheumatoid Arthritis – Diagnosis and Management</i> at <a href="http://www.BCGuidelines.ca">www.BCGuidelines.ca</a>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AST                    | Consider AST (aspartate aminotransferase test) for diagnosing and monitoring liver disease when considering NSAID use.   |

- |                                   |                              |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crystals | <input type="checkbox"/> C&S | <input type="checkbox"/> Microscopy |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

### DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

X-rays are indicated for persistent unexplained joint pain or in anticipation of orthopaedic/rheumatologic referral. Specify the x-rays are for OA.

- knees – must include standing AP, lateral and skyline.
- hips – specify OA hip series including lateral view of the affected hip and upper 1/3 of femur.