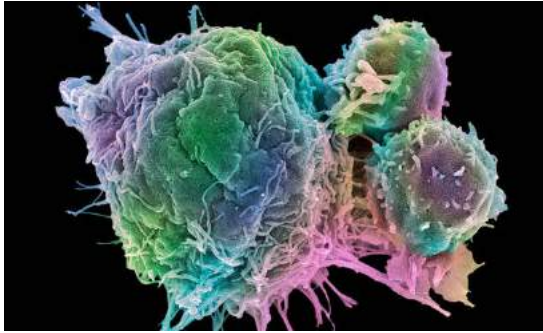




Cancer drugs shed light on rheumatism



Lymphocytes and a cancer cell. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

Side-effects in immunotherapy for cancer patients have given scientists an ally in the battle against rheumatoid arthritis. The human immune system is one of the most effective defence mechanisms known to nature. It can ward off myriad microbial invaders: bacteria, viruses and parasites. It is sometimes overwhelmed by disease, of course, but the billions of men and women who now live on Earth are a testament – at least in part – to the effectiveness of their immune defences.

However, on occasions they go too far. Instead of killing off invading organisms, our immune systems turn on our own tissue and attack it. Conditions such as type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus are all triggered in this way, very often with deeply unpleasant consequences.

In the case of rheumatoid arthritis, immune cells – mainly lymphocytes and macrophages – start to attack the tissue that makes up joints, and these become painful, stiff and swollen. Around one-third of those who develop rheumatoid arthritis will have stopped working within two years of its onset, so painful are its effects. And given that the disease affects more than 400,000 people in the UK, its financial impact is also high: estimates suggest it costs the economy between £3.8bn and £4.8bn a year.

Similar conditions include ankylosing spondylitis, which affects the joints in the spine, again causing pain, stiffness and restricted movement. Around 200,000 people in the UK are affected, at an estimated annual cost of up to £3.8bn to the economy. Meanwhile, juvenile idiopathic arthritis affects 12,000 children under 16, many of whom will suffer severe limitations in movement in their adult life.

Read more: [Cancer patients shed new light on rheumatoid arthritis](#)

Is Vitamin D a Wonder Supplement?

Unlike other letters of the vitamin alphabet, vitamin D defies easy classification. But the "sunshine vitamin" is potentially more beneficial than you may know. [Read on](#) →

Who Gets Psoriasis?



Anyone can have psoriasis. About 7.5 million people in the U.S. are affected, and it occurs equally in men and women. Psoriasis can occur at any age but most often between 15 to 25.

[READ](#)



Is Pizza the New Smart Breakfast?

A new study claims that pizza is a better breakfast choice than cereal, but nutrition experts are decrying this proclamation. We delve into each side's argument.

[Read on](#) →



Want a Longer Life and Happier Gut? Eat More Fiber

It turns out fiber is more than simply a constipation relief aid. New research is revealing it can also transform your gut biome and health for the better. [Read on](#) →

Vitamin D2 vs. D3: What's the Difference?

Vitamins D2 and D3 differ in a few important ways. This article explains the main differences between vitamin D2 and D3.

[Read on](#) →