

## Arthritis Consumer Experts Survey on Arthritis and Mental Health

Arthritis Consumer Experts conducted a national survey to understand how people living with arthritis take care of their mental health and what specific challenges they may face when accessing timely professional care. [Click here to read the full report.](#)

### Survey respondent demographics

- 258 respondents (223 EN/32 FR)
- 9 in 10 were women
- RA – 39%, OA – 35%, AS – 5%, PsA – 9%, Sjögren's syndrome – 2%
- Disease duration
  - o 50% > 10 years
  - o 30% < 5 years
  - o 20% 6 to 10 years
- Black, Person of colour, Indigenous: 3%
- 59% is a college or university graduate
- 14% had high school or equivalent education
- 63% live in large urban centres with population of 100,000 or more



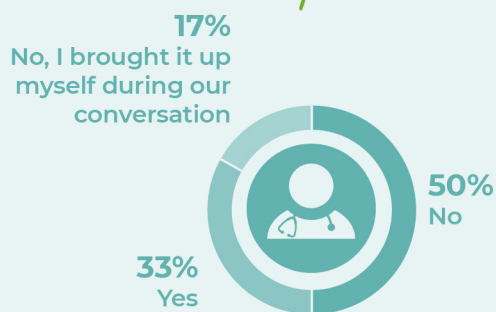
## Health care provider interactions

# of days during the past 30 days respondents were concerned about their mental health:

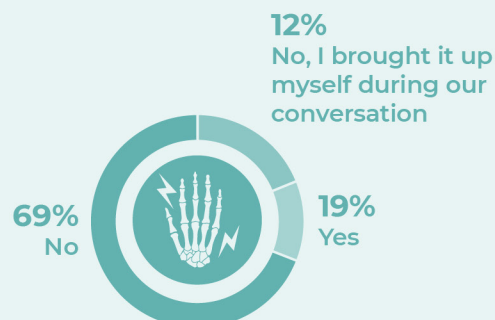


Family doctors or rheumatologists discussions about mental health concerns:

### Family doctor



### Rheumatologist



## Mental health effects on physical health and quality of life



50%

respondents said their arthritis contributed to a decline in their mental health



Females were twice as likely as males to report their arthritis symptoms affected their mental health



11%

Mental health caused them to not take their prescribed arthritis medication



55%

Reported their mental health caused them to interrupt or stop following their healthy diet or nutrition plan



51%

Mental health has made it difficult for them to be physically active or exercise

## Getting a diagnosis and treatment

### Challenges accessing mental health care resources and support:



40%

Health care provider diagnosed them with depression or anxiety and/or recommended medication to treat their symptoms



8%

Not sure where to find mental health resources and support



12%

Not feel comfortable seeking mental health care resources and support



11%

Cannot afford to see a mental health care provider



7%

Put on a wait list to see a mental health care provider



5%

Public and/or private healthcare plans do not cover mental health services

\*45% said they had no difficulty

## Key Takeaways

Respondents report how depression and anxiety weaken a person's ability to deal and cope with pain. ACE's survey shows depression and anxiety in people living with an inflammatory arthritis or osteoarthritis are underdiagnosed and many of those affected don't receive timely mental health treatment, which could potentially help with their arthritis related symptoms.

Respondents spoke about finding themselves in a negative cycle of pain, poor health and negative mood, which led to significant changes to the management of their arthritis. People living with inflammatory arthritis and depression reported having more functional limitations, being less likely to adhere to their treatment plans and developing other health problems.