



# Restless Legs Syndrome and Rheumatoid Arthritis

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

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## Is There a Connection Between RLS and RA?

Restless legs syndrome (RLS) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) are two distinctive conditions, but they actually may occur together in many cases.

In the United States alone, 10 percent of the population has RLS — and a third of those people also have RA. Unfortunately the connection is not totally clear, but there is hope and you are not alone!

RLS causes sensations like throbbing, creeping, and tingling, among others, due to the fact that it's a nervous system disorder. The sensations usually occur at night while you're laying still.

Typically the only way to relieve these feelings is to move your legs. You will feel a strong urge to keep them moving, which will often keep you up at night and cause fatigue in the days that follow.

In addition to being painful and annoying, RLS can actually make symptoms of RA worse when you experience fatigue. This is why proper treatment is crucial, so get in touch with your doctor if you think you may be experiencing RLS.

# WHAT IS Restless Legs SYNDROME?

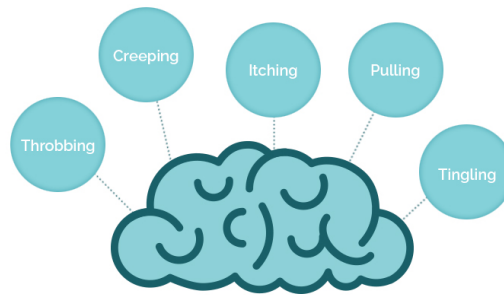
Restless legs syndrome (RLS) and autoimmune diseases often occur together.



## SENSATIONS

RLS is a neurological condition that causes uncomfortable, sometimes painful sensations in the legs, triggering uncontrollable urges to move. It is most noticeable at night, and often impedes sleep.

These sensations can be described as:



Lack of sleep can lead to flare-ups, so it's crucial to get your RLS checked out.

## STAY AWAY FROM

**TOBACCO** **ALCOHOL** **CAFFEINE**

These substances may worsen RLS symptoms.<sup>1</sup>

## HOW IS RLS TREATED?

Massage, exercise, heat/ice packs, and hot baths may also help reduce discomfort, but will not likely eliminate RLS.

If natural remedies aren't helping RLS, your doctor may prescribe you medication so your sleep doesn't suffer: "

- ★ Dopamine
- ★ Sedatives
- ★ Opioids
- ★ Anticonvulsants

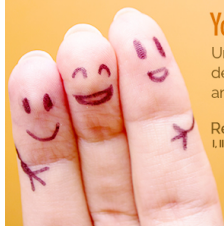
The exact connection between autoimmune diseases and RLS is not yet known, but it could be due to how nerve signals are transmitted.



## You Are Not Alone

Until a proper cure is found, know you are not alone in dealing with your condition and RLS! Relief and support is out there.

Resources:  
1. [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/restless\\_legs/detail\\_restless\\_legs.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/restless_legs/detail_restless_legs.htm)



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