

RCGP Curriculum

Supercondensed Curriculum Guide

MUSCULOSKELETAL HEALTH

Role of the GP

- Support self-care and prevention of MSK problems including lifestyle modification
- Intervene urgently with emergency presentations
- Coordinate care with other healthcare professionals.
- Take into account the psychosocial impact of MSK problems
- Ageing population and advances in MSK treatments
- The long term sequelae of MSK problems on physical and mental health including work
- Increasing service demand resulting in preventable symptomatic decline whilst waiting for definitive treatment
- Move towards urgent referral for inflammatory arthritis.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Symptoms and Signs



- Extra-articular symptoms (e.g., skin, eyes, gastrointestinal)
- Falls and Trauma
- Joint pain, stiffness, swelling, redness
- Lumps and deformities of bone, joint and soft tissue
- Muscle pain and weakness.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Common and Important Conditions



- Arthropathies e.g. inflammatory, reactive, degenerative, crystal
- Bone cancers
- Cervical spine deformities
- Chronic pain
- Congenital MSK disease
- Foot and hand disorders
- Infections
- Metabolic bone disease e.g. Paget's disease
- Rheumatological muscle disease e.g. PMR
- Soft tissue disorders e.g. tendinopathies
- Spinal disorders e.g. cervical spine diseases, spinal stenosis, cauda equina
- Trauma, fractures and wounds.

MUSCULOSKELETAL HEALTH

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Examinations and Procedures



- Functional and screening assessments
- Spine and joint examinations
- Steroid injections.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Investigations



- X-rays, CT, MRI, DEXA, Bone scans, Blood tests
- Scoring systems such as FRAX or frailty scores.

How this might be tested in MRCGP

AKT



- Risk factors for osteoporosis
- Differential diagnosis of musculoskeletal pain
- Recognition of acute inflammatory arthritis.

SCA

- Sight impaired man who has injured their leg while training for a marathon
- Elderly man has back pain which is keeping him awake at night
- A teenage boy with groin/ knee pain has a new limp.



WPBA



- Case Based Discussion (CbD) on a patient who has been started on methotrexate and needs blood tests.
- CEPS on musculoskeletal system
- COT regarding the diagnosis of fibromyalgia in a patient with pain and normal investigations.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (Examples)

Core Content

- **Communication and Consultation**
 - Differentiating inflammatory, reactive, degenerative and crystal arthropathies
 - Ruling out red flags with musculoskeletal presentations
 - Focused musculoskeletal examination
 - Explaining risks and potential complications of surgery prior to referral
 - Lifestyle advice.
- **Prescribing**
 - Chronic pain management
- **Co-morbidity**
 - Obesity
 - Psychosocial impact (e.g., mental health, work)
 - Long-term conditions linked to joint problems (e.g., psoriasis)
 - Musculoskeletal symptoms as a presentation of other systemic illnesses (e.g., polymyalgia rheumatica and underlying malignancy, reactive arthritis secondary to inflammatory bowel disease)
 - Developmental conditions associated with MSK problems (e.g., muscular dystrophy, Down syndrome)
- **Teamworking**
 - Across health and social care, hospital and community
 - Cross-specialty working including GP, A&E, out-of-hours GP, pain management clinics, physiotherapists, occupational therapists
- **Medico-legal/ Ethics**
 - Consent, confidentiality and patient autonomy
 - Use of resources (e.g., radiology imaging for diagnosis, injury and compensation)
- **Prevention**
 - Disease sequelae through early diagnosis
 - Joint damage in the obese and inactive
 - DVT if immobile.

Multidisciplinary Team

- Minor injuries unit
- Occupational therapy
- Orthotics
- Physiotherapy
- Pain management services
- Pain management services
- Podiatry
- Rehabilitation units.

Primary Care



- Daily practice, home visits and out-of-hours GP seeing common musculoskeletal problems (e.g., low back pain)
- Observing joint injections
- Community Musculoskeletal clinics including GPs with Extended Roles clinics.

Acute Care



- General management of trauma; dislocations, fractures (including pathological)
- Acute spinal disorders including cauda equina syndrome
- Crystal arthropathies
- Acute joint and soft tissue infections, osteomyelitis
- Compartment syndromes.

Other Specialties

- A&E (e.g., fractures and trauma)
- Dermatology
- Paediatrics- acute presentations (e.g., limp) and long-term conditions
- Medicine and medicine of the elderly
- Orthopaedics
- Psychiatry.