Axial Spondyloarthritis in Women

Axial Spondyloarthritis (axSpA) is a painful chronic inflammatory disease that primarily affects the spine and sacroiliac joints. axSpA is an umbrella term for non-radiographic axSpA (nr-axSpA) and radiographic axSpA also known as Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS).

**Leading symptom:**
Inflammatory back pain that improves with exercise, but not with rest.

**Prevalence:**
Similar to Rheumatoid Arthritis, 0.2–1.4% of adults have axSpA.

**Historically axSpA has been viewed as a male disease.**

nr-axSpA and AS share common clinical features and experience a significant and similar disease burden.

nr-axSpA patients are more likely to be Women.

66% of Women are misdiagnosed at first.

~25% of Women are misdiagnosed at first.

AS is more prevalent in Men.

65% Time to diagnosis

6.1 years Men

8.2 years Women

Women have longer delay to diagnosis than Men.

Women with axSpA present differently to Men and experience greater:

- Disease activity
- Widespread pain
- Fatigue
- Peripheral involvement
- Functional impairment

MRI allows for earlier disease detection that does not show on X-ray (nr-axSpA).

Improvements in awareness and diagnosis have reduced the gender gap in axSpA.

More can be done for Women with axSpA to ensure that they get the right diagnosis, at the right time and receive the treatment they need.

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**References:**


**Abbreviations:**

axSpA, Axial Spondyloarthritis; nr-axSpA, non-radiographic axSpA; AS, Ankylosing Spondylitis; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging.