



## MRT av spondylartrit

Mats Geijer  
SUS Lund

**Pfizer Experience**

# RMT

**Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in diagnosis of axial spondylarthritis – Part 2**

**Course Directors:**  
Lars Erik Kristensen, Department of Rheumatology, Skåne University Hospital, Malmö  
Mats Geijer, Consultant Radiologist, Department of Radiology and Physiology, Skåne University Hospital, Lund

**Date**  
9 december 2014

**Location**  
Göteborg

**Pfizer**

## Spondylartropatier

- Grupp av överlappande sjukdomstillstånd
  - Ankyloserande spondylit / Mb. Bechterew
  - Reaktiv artrit (Campylobacter, Yersinia, Shigella, Chlamydia spp.)
  - Enteropatisk spondylit (Mb. Crohn, ulcerös colit)
  - Psoriasisartrit
  - Odifferentierad spondylartropati

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## Spondylartropatier karaktäriseras av

- Sacroilit och (ascenderande) spondylit
  - "Sacroiliitis is the hallmark of ankylosing spondylitis"
- Perifer artrit (juxtaartikulär > intraartikulär)
- Entesopati (senfästen, kapselfästen)
- Familjär disposition
- Association med HLA-B27
- Smygande debut med svår klinisk diagnos
- Tidigare svår radiologisk tidigdiagnos
- Tidigare endast symptomatisk behandling

Nu bra radiologi  
Nu bra behandling

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## Modern behandling

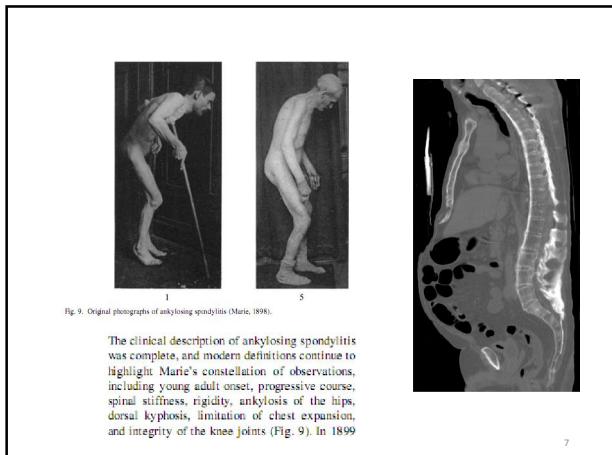
- Sjukgymnastik
- NSAID
- DMARD
  - Corticosteroider
  - Sulfasalazin
  - Metotrexat
- Biologiska läkemedel
  - TNF $\alpha$ -blockerare
    - (tumor necrosis factor alpha)
    - Infliximab - Remicade
    - Adalimumab - Humira
  - Receptorprotein
    - Etanercept- Enbrel

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## Diagnostik

- Anamnes och status
  - BASMI (Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Metrology Index)
  - BASFI (Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Functional Index)
- Laboratorieprover?
- Radiologisk utredning – kotpelare och sacroiliacaleder
  - Röntgen
  - Magnetisk resonanstomografi
  - Datortomografi

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## Kliniska symptom AS

Age at onset < 40 years Duration > 3 months Insidious onset Improvement with exercise Morning stiffness	Chronic back pain with onset < 50 years of age Morning stiffness > 30 minutes Improvement with exercise, but not with rest Awakening during the second half of the night Alternating buttock pain
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Calin et al, 1977 [43]

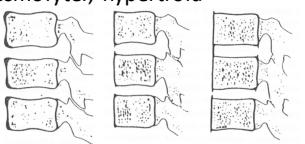
Rudwaleit et al, 2006 [167]

Table 7: Comparison of criteria for inflammatory back pain

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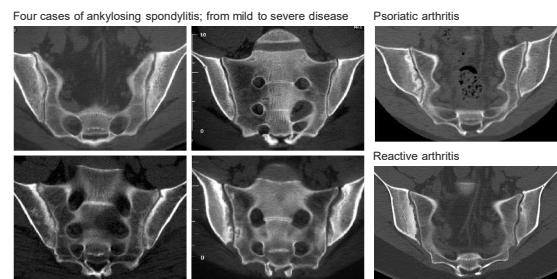
## Patologi

- Inflammation i enteser
  - Ligamentfästen, senfästen
  - Diskapsel circumferent kring disken
  - Ledkapslar (facetleder, costovertralredder, costotransversalredder)
- Benresorption (apofysit, leddestruktur)
- Bennybildning (syndesmofyter, hypertrofa pålagringar)
- Ankylos



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### CT of sacroiliitis



Pathologic findings: Erosions, sclerosis, ankylosis

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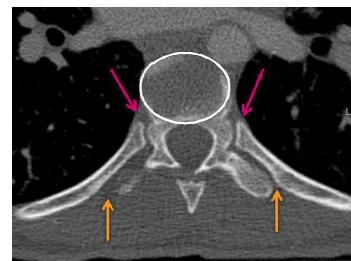
### Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

- Since 1990
- High sensitivity and specificity
- Active inflammation
  - Juxta-articular bone marrow edema
  - Effusion
  - Contrast enhancing inflammatory tissue
- Chronic post-inflammatory changes
  - Fatty metaplasia of bone marrow
  - Erosions
  - Sclerosis
  - Ankylosis

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### Anatomic sites for inflammatory changes



- Disk, surrounded by capsule and ligaments
- Costo-vertebral joints
- Costo-transverse joints
- Facet joints (not shown on image)

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### Anatomic sites for inflammatory changes

Costo-vertebral joints 2-10  
Costo-transverse joints  
Costo-vertebral joints 11-12

Ribs 2 – 10 articulate at disk level  
Ribs 11 – 12 articulate on vertebral body

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### Normal variants and non-inflammatory disease

With increasing age

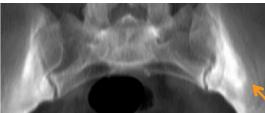
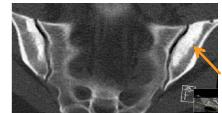
Accessory sacroiliac joints

DISH (Diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis, Mb Forestier – Rotes-Querol)

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### Normal variants and non-inflammatory disease

Stress-related

OCI (Osteitis condensans ili)  

Radiography CT

Same patient on both images

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### Inflammatory and post-inflammatory sacroiliitis

**Inflammation**

- 1 Enthesitis (inflammation of the entheses – insertion points for ligaments and joint capsules)
- 2 Erosions

**Post-inflammatory reparative and/or destructive changes**

- 3 Ankylosis
- 4 Sclerosis and new bone formation
- 5 Post-inflammatory reparative changes

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### Inflammatory and post-inflammatory AS

- Enthesitis (radiographic Romanus lesions, corner lesions on MRI)
- New bone formation (syndesmophytes)
- Further ossification of ligaments, vertebral ankylosis
- Ankylosis of facet joints
- Osteoporosis

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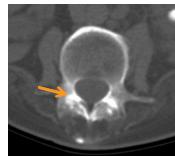
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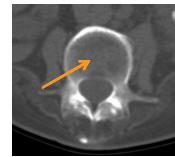
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- **Osteoporosis**



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### MRI: Examination protocol for 1.5 or 3T

**STIR (Short tau inversion recovery) sequence.**

Used to detect active inflammation with bone marrow edema. All signal from fat is extinguished, and signal is derived exclusively from water.



Bone marrow edema  
Bright pelvic veins  
Dark subcutaneous fat

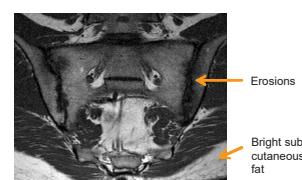
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### MRI: Examination protocol for 1.5 or 3T

**Spin-echo (SE) T1-weighted sequence.**

Used for anatomy, and for chronic changes such as fatty metaplasia of bone marrow, sclerosis, and erosions.

Signal information from fat.



Erosions  
Bright subcutaneous fat

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## Additional sequences are optional

- SE T1-weighted with fat saturation or proton density (PD) with fat saturation may show erosions better
- Intravenous gadolinium contrast has not been shown to have added value in diagnosis

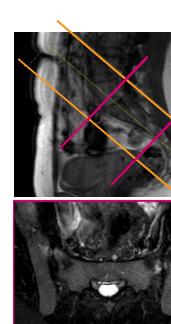
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## MRI: Examination protocol for 1.5 or 3T

**Scan planes, anatomy**

**Oblique coronal sections**  
Parallel to the anterior border of the sacrum (about S2 level), 3 mm thick

**Oblique axial sequences**  
Perpendicular to the sacrum, 3-4 mm thick



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Oblique coronal STIR

Oblique coronal SE T1

Oblique axial STIR

**Recommended standard examination protocol**

- Oblique coronal STIR and SE T1
- Oblique axial STIR (or TSE T2 fs)

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## Inflammatory pathologic changes

- 1 Enthesitis with bone marrow edema
- 2 Fatty metaplasia of bone marrow
- 3 Erosions
- 4 Ankylosis

Small areas of fatty infiltration or edematous high signal may be seen in healthy individuals. According to the ASAS classification criteria there should be minimum 2 areas of "clearly present" bone marrow edema"highly suggestive of SpA" or edema in 2 contiguous sections

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## MRI protocol for axial SpA

### Scan orientation, anatomy

- Sagittal scanning
- Two scans to cover entire spine (cervico-thoracic + thoraco-lumbar)
- Wider scanning than for regular lumbar spine MRI in order to cover area for costo-vertebral and costo-transverse joints

The image shows an axial MRI scan of the spine. Two orange arrows point to specific joints: one pointing diagonally upwards from the bottom left towards the top right, labeled 'Costo-vertebral joint', and another pointing vertically upwards from the bottom center towards the top center, labeled 'Costo-transverse joint'. The scan displays the vertebral body, intervertebral discs, and surrounding soft tissue structures.

Costo-vertebral joint

Costo-transverse joint

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### Active corner lesions and sacroilitis

STIR      T1      STIR      T1

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### Healthy

Small areas with bone marrow edema or fatty infiltration is a common finding in healthy individuals.

### With diagnosis

At least 2 edematous or 5 fatty infiltration areas are needed for diagnosis of AS on MRI.

Midline      Far lateral

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### Sacroiliac joints in the same patient. Ankylosis, fatty infiltration, small areas of bone marrow edema

STIR      T1

① Ankylosis  
② Fatty infiltration  
③ Bone marrow edema

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### Infectious (septic) sacroilitis

Differential diagnosis

Before treatment      February 6

After 6 weeks      March 26

STIR      T2

STIR      T1 fs Gd      T1

Arthritis expanding into soft tissues with abscess formation.  
After treatment, healing of soft tissue infection but increasing bone marrow changes

Strambecher et al. MR imaging of septic sacroiliitis. Skeletal Radiol. 2000;29:439-446.

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### Sacral insufficiency fracture, 74-year-old female

Differential diagnosis

STIR      T1

Bone marrow edema      Fracture line

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### The diagnosis of AS can often be found in prior studies

T1      STIR      T2 fs

Erosions      Fatty replacement      Bone marrow edema

STIR      T2

Bone marrow edema

MRI of the SI joints, sacroiliitis      MRI of the lumbar spine, missed sacroiliitis

July 20      July 5

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The diagnosis of AS can often be found in prior studies



Three years before: Pelvis and hip radiography.  
Missed diagnosis (right-sided sacroiliitis, suspicious on the left)

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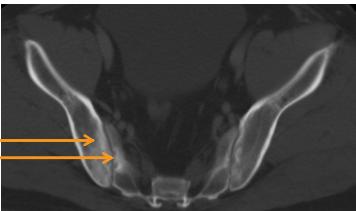
The diagnosis of AS can often be found in prior studies



Sacroiliitis with sclerosis and erosions  
Sacrolia joint radiography four years before:  
Missed diagnosis (right-sided sacroiliitis, suspicious on the left)

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The diagnosis of AS can often be found in prior studies



Polytrauma five years before:  
Missed diagnosis (unilateral sacroiliitis right-sided sacroiliitis, suspicious on the left)

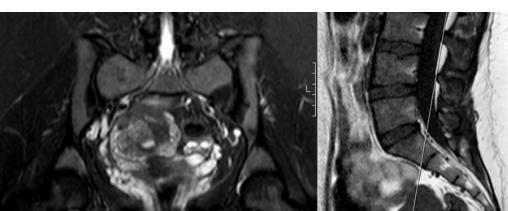
Våga ställa diagnos!



22-årig kvinna. Ryggproblem ett par år. SI-leder?

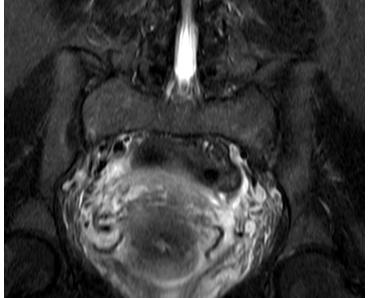
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**Samtidigt:**

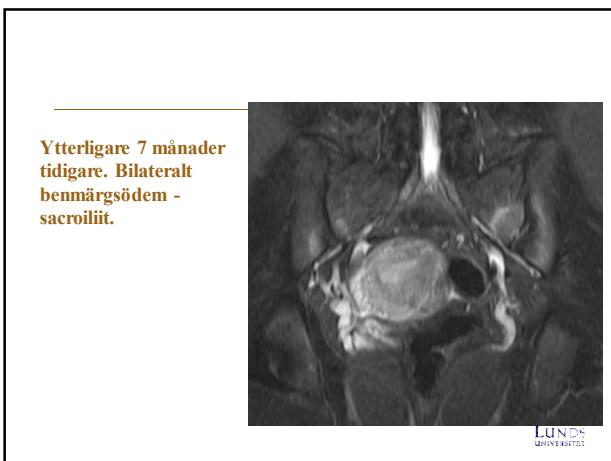


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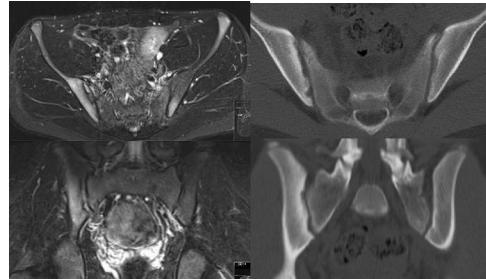
**Exakt ett år tidigare**



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## Jämför CT och MRT



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### Rekommenderad läsning

**MRT:**  
Sieper J., et al. The Assessment of SpondyloArthritis international Society (ASAS) handbook: a guide to assess spondyloarthritis.  
Ann Rheum Dis 2009; 68 (2):1-44.

**Datortomografi:**  
Geijer M. Clinical utility and evaluation of radiology in diagnosing sacroilitis (Thesis). Gothenburg University 2008. <https://gupea.ub.gu.se/dspace/handle/2077/18380>

**Röntgenundersökning:**  
Braum L, Hermann K-GA. Utility of imaging in the diagnosis and assessment of axial spondyloarthritis.  
Int J Adv Rheumatol 2010; 8:127-135.

Vill ni veta mer?  
[www.netdoctorpro.se](http://www.netdoctorpro.se)