

Osteoarthritis and Early Exit From Work Results From The EpiReumaPt Study

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Financiamentos e apoios



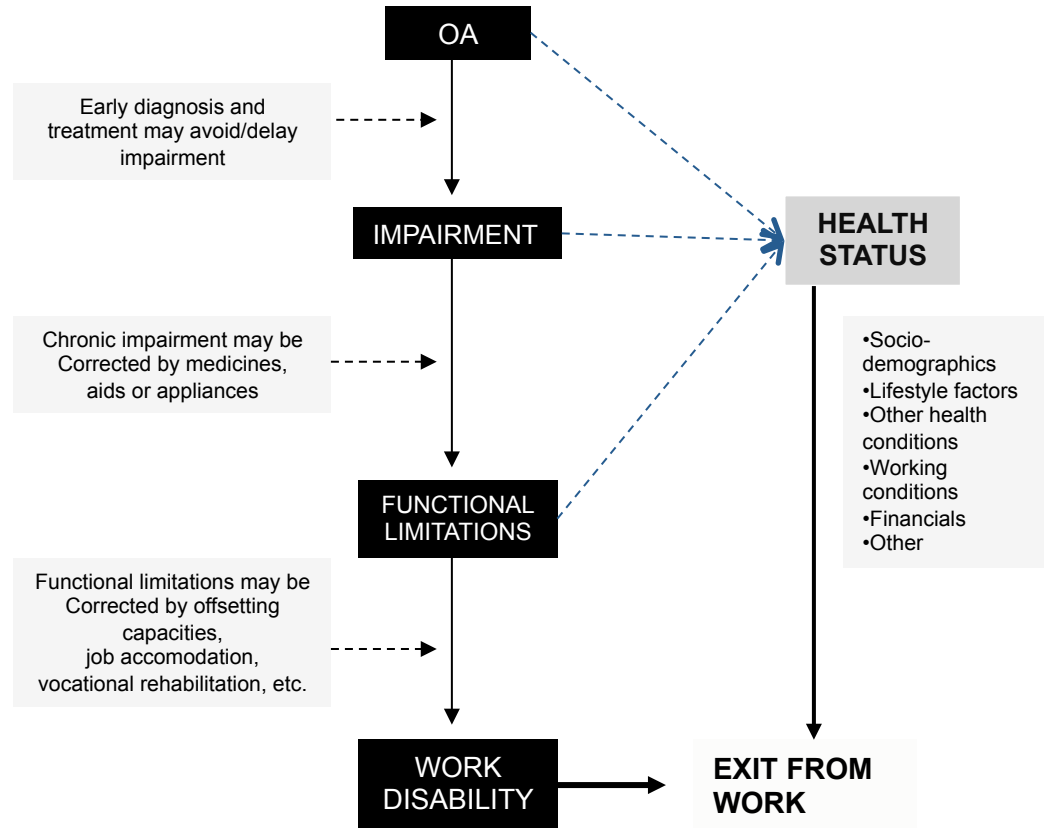
Agradecimentos

A TODOS OS MÉDICOS REUMATÓLOGISTAS E OUTROS PROFISSIONAIS QUE PARTICIPARAM NESTE ESTUDO.

INTRODUCTION

- Osteoarthritis (OA) is a very common and disabling rheumatic condition with its onset often while people are still in paid employment.
- OA may generate difficulties in performing work tasks, leading to early exit from work.

We aim to examine the association between OA and early exit from work by using large real-world observational data.



METHODS

- In this analysis we used all EpiReumaPt participants aged near the official retirement age (i.e. 50 to 65 years old).
- The association of clinically confirmed OA and early exit from paid work (including early retirement, unemployment, unpaid homemakers and disability pensions) was tested using individual level logistic regression.
- Multivariable models were adjusted for age, gender, region (NUTSII), education level (primary school or less, medium and high), household income and other chronic diseases.
- All estimates were computed as weighted proportions, in order to take into account the sampling design.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- The estimated prevalence of OA in the Portuguese population (50 - 64 years old) is 29.7%.
- Among these, 61.8% were out of paid work versus 47.6% for those without OA ($p=0.004$).
- A non-statistically difference was observed when analyzing specifically official early retirement (32.6% vs. 29.1%, respectively).
- OA is associated with early exit from work (unadjusted OR: 1.78; CI: 1.19-2.65; $p=0.005$. Adjusted OR: 1.83; CI: 1.12-2.96; $p=0.015$), but not with official early retirement (OR: 1.18; CI: 0.78-1.79; $p=0.437$).
- Knee OA seems to be strongly associated with early exit from work (unadjusted OR: 2.21; CI: 1.49-3.29; $p<0.0001$. Adjusted OR: 1.96; CI: 1.20-3.21; $p=0.008$), while none significant association was observed for hand OA (OR: 1.20; CI: 0.78-1.86; $p=0.405$) and hip OA (OR: 0.99; CI: 0.33-2.98; $p=0.998$).

	<i>Univariate Logistic Regression OR (95% CI; p value)</i>	<i>Multivariate Logistic Regression OR* (95% CI; p value)</i>
All OA	1.78 (1.20 – 2.65; $p=0.005$)	1.82 (1.12 – 2.96; $p=0.015$)
Knee OA	2.21 (1.49 – 3.29; $p=0.000$)	1.96 (1.20 – 3.22; $p=0.008$)
Hip OA	0.99 (0.34 – 2.98; $p=NS$)	-
Hand OA	1.20 (0.78 – 1.86; $p=NS$)	-

* Adjusted for age, gender, region (NUTSII), education level (primary school or less, medium and high), household income and other chronic diseases. OA: Osteoarthritis; NS: Non-statistically significant.

We found a significant association between OA and early exit from work, but not with early official retirement. This likely mean that while society somehow avoid official retirement due to OA, other routes of early withdrawal from paid work are taking place. Identification of these alternative routes and setting up interventions to reduce or discourage them is crucial for the future sustainability of social protection policies.