



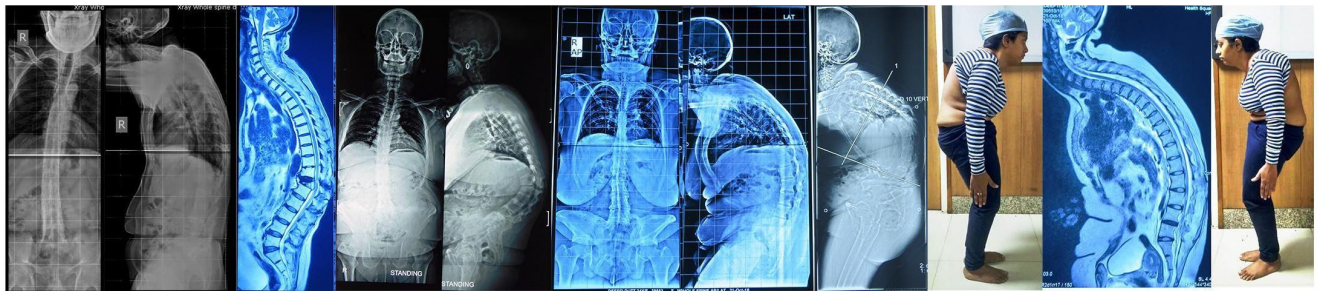
Dr. Shankar Acharya

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ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS

Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) is a type of arthritis that primarily affects the spine. It causes inflammation in the joints and ligaments of the spine, leading to stiffness and pain. Over time, the vertebrae may fuse together, causing a rigid and less flexible spine. Early diagnosis and treatment can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life.



What Causes Ankylosing Spondylitis?

The exact cause of AS is unknown, but it is believed to be linked to:

- **Genetics:** People with a specific gene called HLA-B27 are more likely to develop AS.
- **Immune System:** Abnormal immune responses may contribute to inflammation in the spine and joints.
- **Family History:** Having a close relative with AS increases the risk.

Who Is Affected by Ankylosing Spondylitis?

- AS often begins in late teens or early adulthood, typically between the ages of 15 and 35.
- Men are more commonly affected than women.
- Both urban and rural populations can develop AS, though awareness may vary.

Symptoms of Ankylosing Spondylitis



1. **Lower Back Pain and Stiffness:** Often worse in the morning or after periods of inactivity.
2. **Improved Pain with Activity:** Unlike other forms of back pain, AS often improves with movement.
3. **Hunched Posture:** Over time, the spine may curve forward, causing a stooped appearance.
4. **Pain in Other Joints:** Hips, shoulders, and knees may also be affected.
5. **Fatigue:** Chronic inflammation can make you feel tired.

How Is Ankylosing Spondylitis Diagnosed?

Dr. Shankar Acharya uses a combination of methods to diagnose AS:

- **Medical History:** Asking about symptoms and family history.
- **Physical Examination:** Checking for stiffness, pain, and posture issues.
- **Imaging Tests:** X-rays, MRIs, or CT scans to identify inflammation and bone changes in the spine.
- **Blood Tests:** Testing for the HLA-B27 gene or markers of inflammation.

Treatment Options for Ankylosing Spondylitis

Although AS has no cure, effective treatments can help manage symptoms and prevent complications:

1. **Medications:**
 - Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) reduce pain and inflammation.
 - Biological medications like TNF blockers or IL-17 inhibitors can slow disease progression.
2. **Physical Therapy:**
 - Exercises to improve posture, flexibility, and strength.
 - Stretching routines to reduce stiffness.
3. **Lifestyle Changes:**
 - Regular exercise like swimming or yoga can ease symptoms.



- Maintaining a healthy weight reduces strain on the joints.

4. Surgery:

- In rare cases, joint replacement or spinal surgery may be needed if the condition causes severe deformity or pain.



Living with Ankylosing Spondylitis

Whether you live in a busy city or a rural village, managing AS is possible with these steps:

- **Stay Active:** Movement is essential to keep your spine flexible.
- **Practice Good Posture:** Use supportive chairs and avoid slouching.
- **Seek Regular Care:** Consult a spine expert like Dr. Shankar Acharya to monitor your condition.



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Why Choose Dr. Shankar Acharya for Ankylosing Spondylitis Care?

Dr. Shankar Acharya, a senior consultant and spine surgeon with 30 years of experience at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi, specializes in treating spine conditions like Ankylosing Spondylitis. He offers personalized care to help patients manage their symptoms, maintain mobility, and improve their quality of life.



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