In Germany, about 14,000 children and adolescents suffer from an inflammatory rheumatic disease that can often be chronic. The everyday life of many adolescents is greatly impaired by chronic pain (complex pain syndrome). This often has a serious impact on the lives of children and adolescents with rheumatic diseases, as well as their families.

Early diagnosis and timely, systematic therapy can significantly influence the prognosis; normal physical, social and emotional development is the main therapeutic goal. Aside from outpatient treatment, specialised inpatient therapy managed by a multidisciplinary team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other professionals, led by a rheumatologist experienced in the treatment of children and adolescents, is crucial. At our new Department of Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology, we not only offer specialist outpatient care, but also multidisciplinary inpatient treatment for children and adolescents with rheumatic diseases.

Our unit works closely with the University of Heidelberg Children’s Hospital and the Paediatric Unit of Mittelbaden Hospitals (Baden-Baden Balg). The ACURA Centre for Rheumatic Diseases in Baden-Baden is one of Germany’s largest emergency clinics for rheumatic diseases, boasting modern diagnostic facilities and multimodal treatment programmes which also include a number of therapeutic concepts as well as parent and patient education.

We are delighted to inform you about the medical and therapeutic care we provide to paediatric and adolescent patients, and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Dr. med. Sonja Mrusek
Specialist in paediatric and adolescent medicine, paediatric rheumatologist

Medical management of the Department of Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology at the ACURA Centre for Rheumatic Diseases Baden-Baden
WHO WE ARE: A MEDICAL TREATMENT CENTRE

In our new, modern consultation rooms, we offer rheumatology care to children and adolescents up to the age of 18 years.

**We treat all forms of rheumatic diseases, such as:**

- Juvenile idiopathic arthritis
- Idiopathic, acute and chronic uveitis
- Autoimmune diseases (juvenile dermatomyositis, systemic lupus erythematosus, mixed connective tissue diseases, etc.)
- Autoinflammatory diseases and periodic fever syndromes
- Complex pain syndromes (regional or general)
- Post-infectious and infectious joint diseases

Our diagnostic programme includes not only chemical laboratory tests and immunological testing, but also imaging methods (ultrasound, X-ray, MRI, CT, etc.) as well as a variety of other specialist disciplines available at our health centre (such as neurology with electrophysiology, pulmonology, angiology, gastroenterology).
What does treatment for rheumatic diseases involve?

Depending on the course of the disease, differential diagnostics and treatment will take place either as an inpatient or outpatient. Therapies and treatment concepts focus on three areas:

1. **Medical management of the inflammation**
   - Medicines (see next page)

2. **Maintenance of normal joint mobility and reduction of joint strain**
   - Physiotherapy and occupational therapy including medical aids, if necessary
   - Physical therapy (such as cold and heat therapy, electrotherapy and ultrasound therapy)
   - Orthopaedic/rheumatic-orthopaedic therapy, if necessary

3. **Disease management**
   - Socio-educational counselling and psychological support
   - Patient and parent education
   - Social guidance and support
Why should therapy be managed by experienced paediatric and adolescent rheumatologists?

In recent years, considerable advances have been made in medical therapy for juvenile idiopathic arthritis. It comprises:

1. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication (including ibuprofen, naproxen, diclofenac)
2. Steroid therapy (intra-articular, local to the eye, low-dose or high-dose oral/intravenous systemic treatment)
3. Disease modifying drugs (including methotrexate, sulfasalazine)

and **in courses of disease resistant to these therapies**

4. Biologics, modern immunological drugs (such as etanercept, adalimumab – see figure)

The introduction of these medicines has considerably improved the prognosis of diseases resistant to therapy. Once a diagnosis of juvenile idiopathic arthritis has been confirmed, treatment should be started and monitored by a paediatric rheumatologist who is experienced in the use of these new, highly effective medicines.
TRANSITIONAL CARE

Transitional care of adolescents with juvenile idiopathic arthritis

The ACURA Centre for Rheumatic Diseases in Baden-Baden (Medical Director: Prof. Dr. med. Christoph Fiehn) is an academic teaching hospital and partner clinic to the University of Heidelberg. As such, it is one of the largest and most renowned emergency clinics for rheumatology when it comes to treating adults.

About 50% of adolescents with rheumatic diseases will still have active disease by the time they reach adulthood, meaning that a continuous medical follow-up and transfer to a rheumatologist who deals with adult patients is necessary.

We ensure that adolescent patients with rheumatic diseases are prepared for ongoing rheumatology care in adulthood. By taking their present situation into account (school, training, disease activity, stage of development, etc.), we can carefully plan their transition from paediatric and adolescent care into adult rheumatology service. Close professional collaboration is ensured between the disciplines, including common training and case discussions.
ADDRESS & DIRECTIONS

ACURA Clinics, Centre for Rheumatic Diseases Baden-Baden
Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology
Rotenbachtalstraße 5, 76530 Baden-Baden

CONTACT

Department of Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology
ACURA Centre for Rheumatic Diseases Baden-Baden

Medical Management: Dr. med. Sonja Mrusek
Specialist in Paediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Paediatric Rheumatologist

Secretary: Ms Kerstin Laubel
Telephone 07221/352-530
Telefax 07221/352-535
kinderrheuma@acura-kliniken.com