



Hey there

I hope you're enjoying the summer. If you're motivated by summer fashions, the shoe shopping article on page 6 might appeal. If winter warmth sounds better, enter our competition for a pair of wool lined UGG boots. They could be yours – we never know.

If you find some cool shoes, take a tip from the article on student finance and don't buy them with a store card – or a credit card – unless you will have cash in hand very soon to pay them off.

That's one of many essential tips we've given on how to fund student life, especially if you are disabled. There's plenty of support, and more than we realised, too.

We took a while to find the cover story this time, but it turned out that Ian Murray's determination to get back to his game after a bout of reactive arthritis was a good story about resolve and not letting other people get to you.

We want to hear your thoughts and ideas, so please send an email to NoLimits@arthritiscare.org.uk and tell us what you really think.

Andrew

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Giving the boot

Emily Ross looks at how Scottish premier league footballer, Ian Murray, has battled against reactive arthritis

Hailing from Edinburgh, Ian grew up dreaming of playing for his favourite team – a dream that was realised when he was signed by Hibernian in 1999. A versatile player, he made his first appearance on the pitch in January 2000 at the age of 20, and played a variety of positions, favouring midfield and left back. Just four years later, his raw talent and popularity with the team was recognised when he was appointed club captain.

In 2005 he transferred to the Glasgow Rangers – a decision that led to a lot of bitterness amongst his fans. What should have been a decisive career move became the start of an uphill struggle. During his second season at Rangers in 2006, Ian developed reactive arthritis: an inflammatory condition that develops in response to an infection in another part of the body. It started in his ankle and quickly spread to his knee and every other joint, leaving him in a lot of pain.

Recovering

While football injuries are common, Ian was keen to avoid being seen as a liability. Speaking about his illness in *The Scotsman* newspaper, he said: 'It probably looked like I was picking up a load of injuries, but thankfully we found

out what was causing it.' Because of the severity of the symptoms he was forced to give up the game completely for several months in order to rest, an incredibly frustrating time for the ambitious footballer. However, Ian's optimism and determination to get back in the game kept him going. While he was told it could take up to a year to recover, in the end it was only six months.

Ian's recovery was helped by extensive rehabilitation, and his belief that this setback would not affect his career. This year Ian's hard work to overcome his illness was rewarded when he was re-signed by Hibernian as a midfielder for the 2007-2008 season, and his contract was extended until 2010.

When Ian left the Hibs in 2005 he received a lot of criticism from his fans for transferring. However Hibs boss,

arthritis



↳ **Ian's optimism and determination to get back in the game kept him going... his recovery was helped by his belief that this would not affect his career.** ↳

do a few things to keep his arthritis at bay. If Ian has any discomfort from his joints he takes anti-inflammatory drugs and he has monthly blood tests to help him keep tabs on his health. Speaking to the *Edinburgh News* he said:

'I have my blood taken every couple of months or when I feel that I'm not quite right. But nine times out of 10 it comes back that it is nothing to do with the arthritis. It's automatically the first thing that comes to mind though, if you're feeling ill.'

Ian's struggle with arthritis has made him really appreciate playing football and spurred him to work harder and prove himself to his fans. 'I don't think I have missed a day of training since I have come back,' he says. 'I've been feeling great and hopefully that will continue for a long time to come.'

Reactive arthritis

For most people, reactive arthritis comes and goes, eventually disappearing within 12 months. Treatments for reactive arthritis involve therapies to manage your symptoms and to eliminate any underlying infection such as antibiotics, medication and exercise. ■

Mixu Paaitelainen, told the club's official website he was confident in Ian's ability to overcome this: 'He's a great player and has performed really well since coming back to the club. He has a real determination to succeed.'

Ian returned to football last year with a clean bill of health. However, he still has to

Exercise can be a great way to help your arthritis but you should always check with your doctor before starting new movements. Here are some tips to help you avoid aggravating your joints.

- **Try not to exercise a hot, inflamed joint. It is often too painful to move through its full range of movement but you should move it within the limits of pain.**
- **Return gradually to exercise once the inflammation has subsided.**
- **Most exercises can be adapted to suit your condition.**
- **Maintain the right technique for each exercise.**
- **Don't be deterred if the benefits are not immediate.**
- **Make exercise a habit: keep positive and keep it up.**