

# Degenerative disease

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Synovitis Radiographs are usually the first-line imaging investigation performed for the examination of joints. Typical changes of a degenerative or an erosive arthropathy are well known and understood. However, early arthropathy will be missed on radiographs and, with the advent of disease-modifying drugs, it is important to detect early synovitis before it is even apparent on clinical examination. Gadolinium diethyl triamine penta-acetic (DTPA)-enhanced MRI is the most sensitive method for detecting synovial thickening of numerous joints, but ultrasound is also sensitive, albeit more and in laborious to perform. Ultrasound shows effusions and synovial thickening clearly, and shows the increased blood flow around the affected joints without the use of contrast agents ( Figures 8.19 and 8.20 ). Degenerative disease

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