

# SEE THROUGH THE PAIN WITH *ultrasound*

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The use of ultrasound has long been a vital tool for assisting diagnosis, monitoring diseases, and guiding procedures. It has become an essential part of Rheumatology, especially with the development of new technologies that offer more detailed and higher-resolution imaging of the musculoskeletal system. It has been given top priority and is now included in the training of Rheumatology fellows so that, when practicing—particularly in their respective regions—they can deliver up-to-date, specialized care that was previously unavailable to their patients.

Last August 21, 2025, the Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA) hosted a musculoskeletal ultrasound workshop focusing on the hands and wrists at Saint Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. It was led by Dr. Juan Javier Lichauco, along with other experienced rheumatologists who have incorporated ultrasound into their daily practice. Fellows from all the rheumatology training institutions in Metro Manila were invited to attend the workshop to learn the basics and recognize pathological findings in the hands and wrists. The event was made possible by including patients with actual joint deformities caused by rheumatologic conditions. These included Rheumatoid Arthritis, Psoriatic Arthritis, and Adult-Onset Still's Disease, providing fellows with a diverse set of conditions and ultrasound pathologies to observe



Dr. Lichauco orienting the fellows



Before the program began, the fellows received copies of literature that helped them learn the terminology for specific pathological findings, their definitions, and how these abnormal findings are graded based on severity. Each group of fellows from five different institutions was assigned a station with one patient to examine, focusing on the hands and wrists, and then using ultrasound to image areas with abnormal findings, such as deformities and signs of active inflammation. The fellows then rotated to each station to meet the other patient participants and view their hands and wrists with ultrasound. The Rheumatologists teaching the fellows were very hands-on and provided detailed explanations of what was seen on the ultrasound.



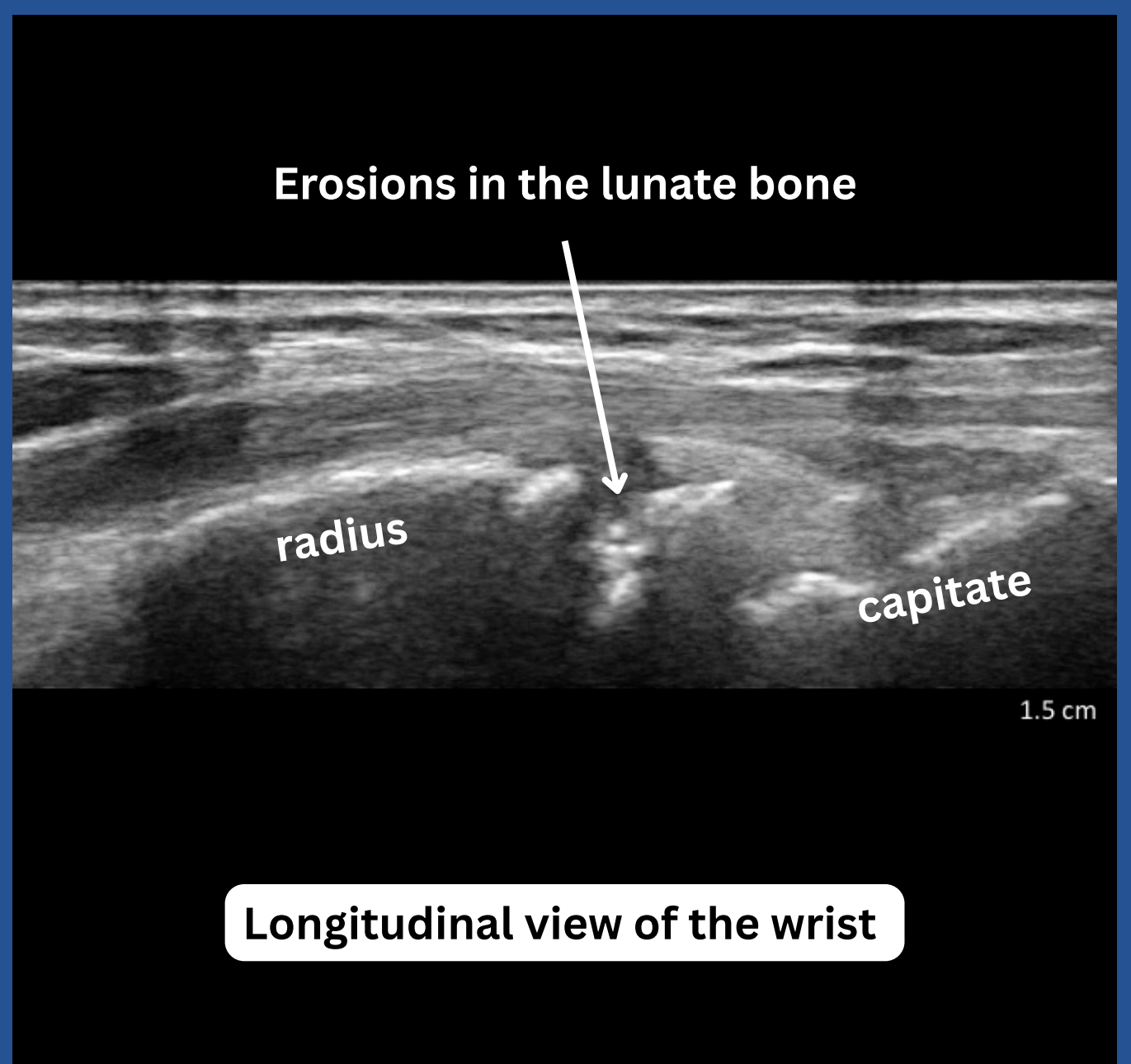
**Fellows with the Rheumatology Consultants**



**Fellows with Dr. Sollano imaging the wrist of a patient with RA**



**Patient partners attending the workshop**



**Longitudinal view of the wrist**





The workshop was highly successful overall and packed with valuable learning opportunities. Our key takeaways include: first, understanding terminologies and their definitions is crucial for correctly linking ultrasound pathologic findings to the relevant rheumatologic conditions; second, knowing the different grading systems for these ultrasound findings helps us better inform our patients about the severity of their condition and allows us to develop more personalized treatment plans; finally, the importance of using power Doppler to detect active inflammation has been studied and can even help predict outcomes of rheumatologic conditions affecting the musculoskeletal system. This tool will undoubtedly help us provide a more nuanced approach to patient care.