INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE WORK

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic, symmetrical, inflammatory polyarthritis involving the diarthroidal joints and exhibiting, in a proportion of patients, a variety of extra-articular features such as vasculitis and nodules **(Panayi, 1986).**

Osteoarthritis is the most common rheumatic disease characterized by progressive loss of articular cartilage and reactive changes at the margins of the joint and in the subchondral bone **(Schumacher et al., 1988).**

Fibronectin is a glycoprotein synthesised by connective tissue cells and secreted into their environment. It also present in plasma and other body fluids **(Hynes,1985).** It has been shown to have many interactions especially with elements of haemostasis. Also it binds to fibrinogen, fibrin, sulphated proteoglycans, hyaluronic acid and components of bacterial cell wall **(Mosher, 1984).**

Because fibronectin is a secretory product of connective tissue cells, and because of its mode of interaction with certain components concerned in the organisation and repair of inflamed tissues, it seemed important to investigate the possible role of fibronectin in rheumatic diseases **(Scott et al., 1981).**