

DISEASE-MODIFYING ANTI-RHEUMATIC DRUG THERAPY FOR RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS (ART)

Effectiveness of Care HEDIS® Measure

Measurement definition

Patients ages 18 and older within the measurement year who were diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and filled at least one ambulatory prescription for a disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD) in the current measurement year.¹

Exclusions

Patients are excluded if they:

- Received hospice care during the measurement year.
- Have a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) diagnosis.
- Have a pregnancy diagnosis.
- Are age 81 or older with frailty.
- Are ages 66–80 with advanced illness and frailty (for additional definition information, see the Advanced Illness and Frailty Guide).

Information that patient medical records should include

- A diagnosis of RA only if confirmed through appropriate testing (often providers incorrectly code a diagnosis of osteoarthritis or joint pain as RA).
- The DMARD prescribed and the date it was prescribed (below is a chart of DMARDs that fall under the measure).

Description	Prescription
5-Aminosalicylates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sulfasalazine
Alkylating agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyclophosphamide
Aminoquinolines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hydroxychloroquine
Anti-rheumatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auranofin Methotrexate Leflunomide Penicillamine
Immunomodulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abatacept Adalimumab Anakinra Certolizumab Certolizumab pegol Etanercept Golimumab Infliximab Rituximab Sarilumab Tocilizumab
Immunosuppressive agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azathioprine Cyclosporine Mycophenolate
Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baricitinib Tofacitinib
Tetracyclines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minocycline

Tips for success

- Refer patients to a rheumatologist to assist with treatment.
- Medication samples, when given, interfere with pharmacy claims and produces false non-adherent results.

Tips for talking with patients

- Educate patients on the importance of DMARD treatment in managing rheumatoid arthritis, unless contraindicated.
- Educate patients that they need to make at least two follow-up appointments a year after their initial diagnosis to monitor their disease, evaluate the effectiveness of their DMARD therapy, and manage potential adverse RA events with an adjusted DMARD treatment.



One in a series of tip sheets about HEDIS[®] and other measures that contribute to star ratings of Medicare Advantage plans.

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¹National Committee for Quality Assurance. HEDIS[®] 2020 Volume 2 Technical Specifications for Health Plans (2019), 216-220

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