

# Disease-Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drug Therapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Effectiveness of Care HEDIS® Measure

## Measure 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.<sup>ii</sup>

## Exclusions

Patients are excluded if they:

- Received hospice care during the measurement year
- Have a diagnosis of HIV
- Are pregnant
- Are age 81 or older with frailty
- Are ages 66–80 with advanced illness and frailty (for definition information, see the Advanced Illness and Frailty Exclusions Guide in the [February Provider Update](#))

## Patient medical records should include<sup>iii</sup>

- A diagnosis of confirmed RA
- The DMARD prescribed and the date of prescription

## DMARDs that qualify for the HEDIS measure

Description	Prescription
5-Aminosalicylates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sulfasalazine</li></ul>
Alkylating agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cyclophosphamide</li></ul>
Aminoquinolines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hydroxychloroquine</li></ul>
Anti-rheumatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ridaura</li><li>• Methotrexate</li><li>• Leflunomide</li><li>• Penicillamine</li></ul>
Immunomodulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orencia</li><li>• Humira</li><li>• Kineret</li><li>• Cimzia</li><li>• Enbrel</li><li>• Simponi</li><li>• Remicade</li><li>• Rituxan</li><li>• Kevzara</li><li>• Actembra</li></ul>
Immunosuppressive agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Azathioprine</li><li>• Cyclosporine</li><li>• Mycophenolate</li></ul>
Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Olumiant</li><li>• Xeljanz</li></ul>
Tetracyclines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minocycline</li></ul>

## Tips for success

- Refer patients to a rheumatologist to assist with treatment

- Note that medication samples, when given, interfere with pharmacy claims and produce false non-adherent results

### **Tips for talking with patients**

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

### **Sources**

<sup>i</sup> Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set. HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

<sup>ii</sup> National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. <https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/rheumatoid-arthritis>

<sup>iii</sup> National Committee for Quality Assurance. <https://www.ncqa.org/hedis/measures/disease-modifying-anti-rheumatic-drug-therapy-for-rheumatoid-arthritis/>