

## **Don't prescribe biologics for rheumatoid arthritis before a trial of methotrexate (or other conventional non-biologic DMARDs)**

Methotrexate and other non-biologic disease-modifying antirheumatic medicines (DMARDs) appear to be beneficial in many people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Unless contraindicated, nonbiologic DMARDs should be used as the first line of treatment for RA. If a patient's response to methotrexate, with or without other non-biologic DMARDs, is insufficient after a three-month trial, biologic therapy may be considered. Patients with active illness and poor prognostic characteristics (functional restrictions, disease outside the joints, seropositivity, or bone destruction) may benefit from biologic therapy as a first-line treatment option.

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