

This communication is meant to clarify common misconceptions around medication use in arthritis. Information provided below reflects evidence based best practice at the time of release. (November 2015)

*Please note checked off item below (Instruction for sender: check off the item applicable to your scenario)*

**Concurrent Use of NSAIDs and Low-Dose Methotrexate (MTX) in Rheumatoid Arthritis is Not a Clinically Significant Interaction**

The concurrent use of NSAIDs with MTX is commonly recommended in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Please note that in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, the combination of **low dose MTX** (subcutaneous (sc)  $\leq 25$ mg weekly) and NSAIDs (excluding anti-inflammatory doses of ASA) is not a clinically significant interaction, as supported by a recent Cochrane review.<sup>1,2</sup>

**Concurrent Use of Proton Pump Inhibitors and Low-Dose Methotrexate is Not a Clinically Significant Interaction**

The new safety information from Health Canada on Interaction of Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) with MTX dated Oct 2012 specified that only concomitant use **high** dose MTX ( $> 500$ mg) and PPI may increase amount of methotrexate in the blood leading to adverse effects.

**Concomitant use of Trimethoprim and Methotrexate is a Clinically Significant Drug Interaction**

MTX and Trimethoprim (2 anti-folate agents) are an extremely serious life-threatening combination.<sup>7</sup> However, MTX ( $\leq 25$ mg) used in rheumatology can be safely taken together with other antibiotics such as amoxicillin, erythromycins and quinolones.

**Methotrexate can be given as subcutaneous self-injection**

Subcutaneous (sc) methotrexate is recommended by a number of guidelines including those of the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA 2011)<sup>4</sup>, the European League of Association of Rheumatology (EULAR 2013)<sup>5</sup> and the American College of Rheumatology (ACR 2015)<sup>6</sup>. Information on a technique for sc self-injection of Methotrexate can be found at <http://rheuminfo.com/medications/methotrexate/inject-methotrexate>

We hope that by sharing this information, our patients will receive consistent information from pharmacists.<sup>8</sup> **Remember general information on MTX, such as warnings from pharmacy databases is usually based on oncology doses (2000 to 3000 mg), and it is not applicable to use of MTX in rheumatology ( $\leq 25$ mg po or sc qwk).**

The above, has been reviewed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association.

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References:

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