What is important to you about arthritis medicines?

Things to Consider?

How Often?

Side Effects?

How Soon?

Cost?

How Long?

Things to Consider?

Avoid these medicines if you...

🫀 : have liver disease

TB : have TB (you may need to be tested)

While taking these medicines you should...

👶 : **not** become pregnant

🍸 : **not** drink alcohol

➕ : **not** receive *live* vaccines

Medications require blood test monitoring.

Pick another topic

Leflunomide
(Arava®)

Sulfasalazine
(Azulfidine®)

Methotrexate
(Rheumatrex® or Trexall®)

Etanercept
(Enbrel®)

Adalimumab
(Humira®)

Anakinra
(Kineret®)

Canakinumab
(Ilaris®)

Abatacept
(Orencia®)

Infliximab
(Remicade®)

Rituximab
(Rituxan®)

Tocilizumab
(Actemra®)

Medications differ on how often they need to be given.

Leflunomide (Arava®)
1x day

Sulfasalazine (Azulfidine®)
2x day

Methotrexate (Rheumatrex® or Trexall®)
1x week

Etanercept (Enbrel®)
1-2x week

Adalimumab (Humira®)
2-4x month

Anakinra (Kineret®)
1x day

Canakinumab (Ilaris®)
1x month

Abatacept (Orencia®)
1x month

Infliximab (Remicade®)
1x month

Rituximab (Rituxan®)
2x in 1 month every 6 months

Tocilizumab (Actemra®)
1-2x month

Pick another topic

Updated 3.29.13

Side Effects?

There is no way to predict which, if any, of these side effects you will experience.

Pick another topic

	Common:	**Uncommon:**
Leflunomide (Arava®) Sulfasalazine (Azulfidine®)	• stomach upset • diarrhea • headache • cold symptoms	• low blood counts • severe liver injury (Leflunomide only) • severe skin reaction (Sulfasalazine only)
Methotrexate (Rheumatrex® or Trexall®)	• mouth sores • nausea • stomach upset • headache	• abnormal liver test • low blood counts • lung inflammation
Etanercept (Enbrel®) Anakinra (Kineret®) Adalimumab (Humira®) Canakinumab (Ilaris®)	• redness or soreness where needle enters skin • common cold • sinus infection • stomach upset • headache • itchy or allergic rash	• TB may come back • serious infection that needs antibiotic • low blood counts • development of autoantibodies • muscle inflammation • cancers like lymphoma
Abatacept (Orencia®) Rituximab (Rituxan®) Infliximab (Remicade®) Tocilizumab (Actemra®)	• common cold • sinus or throat infection • stomach upset • headache	• TB may come back • serious infection that needs antibiotic • low blood counts • development of autoantibodies • cancers like lymphoma • severe infusion reaction (allergic reaction)

How Soon?

These medicines do not work right away.

In general, these medicines begin to work between 2 and 12 weeks.

There are ways to manage symptoms until these medicines start working.

Pick another topic

Leflunomide (Arava®)
4-8 weeks

Sulfasalazine (Azulfidine®)
4-12 weeks

Methotrexate (Rheumatrex® or Trexall®)
4-6 weeks

Etanercept (Enbrel®)
2-4 weeks

Adalimumab (Humira®)
2-4 weeks

Anakinra (Kineret®)
1-3 weeks

Canakinumab (Ilaris®)
1-3 weeks

Abatacept (Orencia®)
2-12 weeks

Infliximab (Remicade®)
2-4 weeks

Rituximab (Rituxan®)
2-4 weeks

Tocilizumab (Actemra®)
2-4 weeks

Cost?

What you pay will depend on your insurance.

Patient assistance programs may be available.

Leflunomide (Arava®)   Sulfasalazine (Azulfidine®)

———— $ ————

Methotrexate (Rheumatrex® or Trexall®)

— $ —

Etanercept (Enbrel®)   Adalimumab (Humira®)   Anakinra (Kineret®)   Canakinumab (Ilaris®)

———————— $$ ————————

Abatacept (Orencia®)   Infliximab (Remicade®)   Rituximab (Rituxan®)   Tocilizumab (Actemra®)

———————— $$$ ————————

Pick another topic

How Long?

Stopping or decreasing the medicine may be considered after the disease is well controlled.
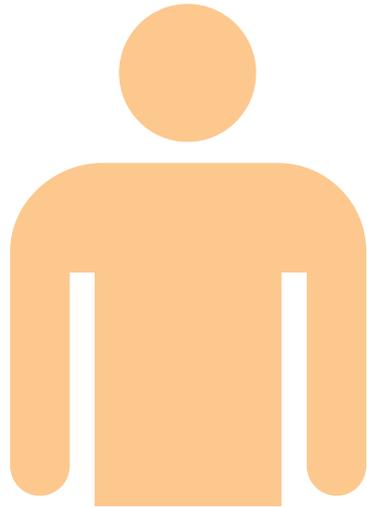
- How long has the disease been under control?
- Are there bothersome side effects?
- How often does arthritis remain well controlled after stopping?
- What are the treatment options if the arthritis comes back or flares?

Pick another topic