

Resource

## General medicine information

People diagnosed with RA will often be on multiple medications. In addition to disease control, there may be medications for symptom control or other health conditions. You may also need general information about how to report side effects or which vaccinations you can have.

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As well as the medications prescribed by your rheumatologist to manage your RA and its symptoms, you may also be on medications for related complications. You may be given specific guidance on immunisations and vaccines.

If you live in England and are not eligible for free prescriptions, the number of medications being prescribed to you could be expensive for you to pay for on a regular basis. There are options for

payment of prescription charges including obtaining help with health costs which could be helpful. Please see our related Article:

[Article on Prescription Charges](#)

## Medicines in rheumatoid arthritis

We believe it is essential that people living with RA understand why certain medicines are used, when they are used and how they work to manage the condition.

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### [Immunisation for people with rheumatoid arthritis](#)

[People living with RA need to take care to protect themselves against infections. The risk of infections, including common colds, but also serious infections such as flu or pneumonia, can be increased in RA. The disease and treatments both alter the body's immune system, reducing the](#)



[they become severe.](#)

[Article](#)

## [Live vaccines](#)

[As many with RA are unable to have live vaccines due to the medications they take, we have looked into contact with live vaccines, whether directly or have had live vaccines.](#)



[Article](#)

## [Keep taking the pills](#)

Adherence is often easier said than done. In broadest terms it is defined as “the extent to which a patient follows the directions of their health care provider”, and whether it relates to taking medication, following a diet, or exercising, there is no doubt that it can require psychological stamina.



## Article

### Photosensitivity

Photosensitivity causes a reaction to sunlight and can be caused by health conditions and medications. RA is not, by itself, a condition that would make you more sensitive to the sun, but a number of medications are considered photosensitive.

## Article

### Reporting side effects

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) has launched an app for patients and healthcare professionals to report the side effects of medicines via the Yellow Card Scheme. Side effects can also be reported through the scheme online or by phone.

## Article

### Prescription charges

Prescription medications are free for patients in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, however, there is currently a charge per item which many people may have to pay if they are not eligible for help. Some are quite expensive but there are options for spreading the cost (e.g. Prescription Payment Cycle (PPC)) or obtaining help with health care costs.



[Article](#)

## [Remission](#)

[Unlike some other conditions, remission in RA does not mean that your disease has completely gone. It is more like a dormant volcano, able to erupt again, but currently stable.](#)

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