105. ADHERENCE TO DISEASE-MODIFYING ANTI-RHEUMATIC DRUGS IN PATIENTS WITH INFLAMMATORY ARTHRITIS: A SURVEY OF PATIENTS ATTENDING THE RHEUMATOLOGY OUTPATIENTS DEPARTMENT

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Background: In line with treat to target principles, many patients with inflammatory arthritis receive multiple DMARDs which can pose issues with compliance and will ultimately affect efficacy of treatment. A recent study, investigating patient compliance whilst on DMARDs and biologic therapies indicated that approximately 40% of patients on multiple therapies did not purchase or ingest their DMARD medication.

Results: Medication compliance was investigated using a medication survey. All rheumatology patients attending for follow-up appointments over a period of 2 weeks were invited to participate. The surveys assessed which DMARDs patients were prescribed and how many doses of each medication were missed each month. In addition we investigated the reasons for missing medication doses and suggestions for improving compliance.

Results: The completed surveys (N=105) demonstrate that 20% of patients on DMARDs miss one or more medication doses each month. Of those questioned, 78% of patients are taking multiple medications. The most frequently missed medications were MTX and folic acid (8.8%), however these were also the most commonly prescribed drugs with 65% of participants taking them. The most frequently cited reason for missing medication doses was forgetfulness.

Conclusion: This study does not support the results of previous studies. The results of this study show that only 20% of patients missed doses of their medications. Therefore, concerns about poor patient compliance should not be a barrier to the prescription of DMARDs. To improve compliance, rheumatology staff could ask patients whether they require pill boxes or blister packs to aid in remembering to take medications. They could also suggest to patients that they set daily reminders, particularly if they use a smart phone, in order to increase compliance.

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