

## **Clinic prompt for adults with suspected early inflammatory arthritis**

This clinic prompt has been developed using evidence from the national early inflammatory arthritis audit (NEIAA) and recommendations from the NICE guidelines for the management of adults with Rheumatoid Arthritis. It is intended as an aide-memoire to support decision-making and could also be used as a training tool at induction, and for educational interventions.

### **All patients presenting with suspected early inflammatory arthritis**

**Patient information:** Explain

- mechanisms for gaining urgent advice if appropriate and required e.g. helpline
- how to change appointment times, if needed
- importance of investigations and of attendance for future appointments

**Investigations:** consider blood tests, RF/CCP antibodies, MSK and chest X-ray, US, PFTs, BP, ophthalmology assessment as required for:

- diagnostic purposes
- disease activity assessment
- screening prior to DMARD treatment
- monitoring for complications of DMARDs prescribed

**NEIAA data collection:** Submit demographic and diagnosis data

### **Additional actions for all patients with confirmed diagnosis of early inflammatory arthritis**

**Patient Information:**

- Provide initial education on inflammatory arthritis and its treatment, including written information
- Refer for further education within 1 month
- Consider referral to NRAS right start initiative via [www.nras.org.uk/new2ra-right-start-service](http://www.nras.org.uk/new2ra-right-start-service)

**Assessment:** Assess and record DAS28

**Management:**

- Agree with patient
  - initial treatment, including DMARDs  $\pm$  steroids and analgesia
  - treatment target
  - need for AHP referral (PT, OT, podiatry, psychology)
  - timeframe for follow up appointment
- Request immunisations prior to starting DMARDs (e.g. flu, pneumococcus, varicella)
- Record reasons for not commencing DMARDs, if relevant

**NEIAA data collection:** Submit clinician baseline and PRO data

### **Additional actions for all patients with diagnostic uncertainty**

**Patient Information:** Provide information on the potential diagnoses

**Assessment:** Assess and record DAS28

**Management:** Arrange timely review

**NEIAA data collection:**

- Update NEIAA data once a diagnosis is confirmed and with investigation results
- Submit clinician baseline and PRO data if IA confirmed