Persons with Rheumatoid Arthritis

What is Rheumatoid Arthritis?
Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a long-term disease that leads to inflammation of the joints and surrounding tissues. It can also affect other organs. If you feel you have signs of RA, be sure to talk to your doctor.

Higher risk of infection
RA results in higher risk of infection. A taxed immune system (caused by RA) can make it harder for you to fight off infections. Talk to your doctor.

Serious Infections & Important Facts

DMARD
If we follow 100 people with RA with or without a DMARD for a year, about 3-4 will end up with a serious infection.

Biologic (TNF inhibitor)
If we take these same 100 people, put them on a TNF inhibitor, and follow them for a year about 6 or 7 will end up with a serious infection.

However, after the first year the risk decreases to baseline. This means that those people who get infections do so in the first year.

Cancer
When followed for a year, 99% of patients with RA, regardless of their treatment, don’t develop cancer. However, be sure to discuss this with your doctor if you have had cancer in the past.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you:
- Develop a fever
- Think you have an infection
- Are given antibiotics to treat infection

Please call your doctor if you have any concerns.

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