

Should patients in remission stop taking expensive rheumatoid arthritis drugs?

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Stopping expensive biological drugs used to treat rheumatoid arthritis in patients who are in remission or who have low disease activity can save considerable costs, but it results in a small loss of quality-adjusted life years, according to a recent *Arthritis & Rheumatology* study.

In the study, stopping [tumor necrosis factor](#) inhibitors in patients with stable low disease activity, on average, was associated with a cost saving of €7,133, a loss of 0.022 quality-adjusted life years, and an increase of 0.41 arthritis flares per patient per year.

"The subpopulation of patients receiving biological disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs including tumor necrosis factor inhibitors... has increased over time and accounted for up to 20% of the population of [rheumatoid arthritis](#) patients in various Western healthcare systems," the authors wrote.

More information: An Tran-Duy et al, An Economic Evaluation of Stopping versus Continuing TNF-Inhibitor Treatment in Rheumatoid Arthritis Patients in Remission or Low Disease Activity: results from the POET randomized trial, *Arthritis & Rheumatology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1002/art.40546](#)

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