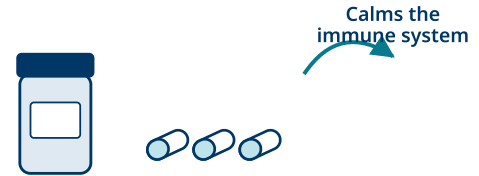




# DMARDs (Disease-Modifying Antirheumatic Drugs)

## What it is

DMARDs are medicines that slow down diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. They work by calming the immune system. They may help prevent joint damage. They can take weeks to months to work.



Taken by mouth or, for some,  
a weekly shot

## Who it may help

- Rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis
- Lupus and Sjögren's (often hydroxychloroquine)
- Some forms of vasculitis and other autoimmune diseases

## Self-care tips

- Take it exactly as prescribed. Do not stop or change the dose on your own.
- Keep all lab tests and follow-up visits.
- Tell every provider, dentist and pharmacist what you take.
- Ask before getting vaccines or starting new medicines or supplements.

## What to expect

**Before you start:** Your rheumatologist reviews your health and may order blood tests.

**Taking it:** Most are pills. Methotrexate may be a weekly pill or shot. Benefits build over weeks to months.

**Follow-up:** You have regular visits and lab tests to check how it works and watch for side effects.

## When to call us

- Fever, chills, cough or other signs of infection
- A new rash, mouth sores or easy bruising
- Side effects that worry you
- You are pregnant or plan to be

**Call 911 for trouble breathing, or swelling of the face, lips or throat.**

## Call 732-202-3000

One number for all offices. Questions about this handout? We are glad to help.

**Our 7 offices:** Whiting · Toms River (Hooper Ave) · Brick · Barnegat · Manahawkin · Freehold · West Long Branch

[gsmedicalcenter.org/services/rheumatology/treatments/dmards/](https://gsmedicalcenter.org/services/rheumatology/treatments/dmards/)



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*This handout is general information and is not a substitute for medical advice.*