

Health Bulletin

Encouraging News For Rheumatoid Arthritis Patients

(NAPSA)—For the more than 2.1 million Americans affected by rheumatoid arthritis, there is encouraging news about how antibiotic therapy can be a safe, low-cost way to manage many of the symptoms of the disease.

Rheumatoid arthritis causes pain, stiffness, warmth, redness and swelling, affecting many different joints.

A recent survey of nearly 200 people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) or scleroderma, another disabling rheumatic condition, revealed that by taking antibiotic therapy for their disease, they experienced a number of positive benefits over traditional prescription medications. These patients reported a reduction in pain and improved quality of life, and their overall condition was reported to be less severe.

These survey results suggest antibiotics such as minocycline may offer an effective option for patients newly diagnosed or patients who either fail with or cannot tolerate conventional medications commonly prescribed for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. Minocycline is a low-cost and commonly prescribed antibiotic with minimal side effects. The study was conducted by Harris Interactive.

“We know that a growing number of RA and other rheumatic patients are turning to antibiotic therapy to successfully manage their disease. These results suggest that others, too, could possibly benefit from this type of treatment,” said David Trentham, M.D., a noted rheumatologist and



A GROWING NUMBER of RA and other rheumatic patients are turning to antibiotic therapy to successfully manage their disease.

Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and Medical Director for the Road Back Foundation, a nonprofit organization providing support and education to people suffering from rheumatic diseases.

Patients responding to the survey who were on antibiotic therapy and had also taken traditional prescription medication were asked to compare the two types of treatments. They overwhelmingly reported improvements in slowing the progression of the disease, decreased levels of pain, and reduced stiffness, swelling and fatigue, all commonly reported symptoms. Patients also found that antibiotic treatment improved their overall quality of life and was better tolerated than traditional therapies.

The Road Back Foundation encourages patients to talk with their doctors about their treatment and, if appropriate or needed, discuss the use of antibiotic therapy in the management of their disease.

For more information about the use of antibiotic therapy in rheumatoid arthritis, visit www.roadback.org.