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Adherence to Methotrexate therapy in patients with rheumatoid arthritis - a hospital based cross sectional study from Kochi, Kerala.

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a chronic systemic autoimmune disease that affects the joints, connective tissues, muscle, tendons, and fibrous tissues. The main symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis are joint pain, swelling, and stiffness. **METHODOLOGY:** A hospital-based cross-sectional survey was carried out among the RA patients attending rheumatology OPD at a tertiary care hospital in Kochi between January -April 2019. The minimum calculated sample size was 52 and data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire containing questions from CQR 5 to assess adherence to treatment and DAS28 & VAS to assess disease severity. Ethical clearance was given by the Institution Ethical Committee and all participants were interviewed after taking written informed consent. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 22. **RESULT:** A total of 86 individuals were included in the study and the compliance to methotrexate therapy was found to be 73.3% among participants aged ≥ 18 years using the CQR 5 questionnaire. Homemakers and the elderly were more compliant. Side effects following methotrexate therapy, family history, the severity of the disease did not have an effect on compliance to methotrexate. **CONCLUSION:** Approximately one-fourth of our participants were found to have low compliance to methotrexate. A multi-centric cohort study might help us in better understanding the factors influencing adherence to methotrexate therapy in patients with rheumatoid arthritis.

Key word: compliance, adherence, methotrexate therapy, rheumatoid arthritis