Objective: The ultimate goals in managing Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) are preventing or controlling joint damage, preventing loss of function and decreasing pain. Assessment of disease activity is critical; therefore, guidelines recommend that physicians evaluate patients’ symptoms and severity. The objective of this study was to examine how often evaluation of disease activity and damage in patients with RA was documented by physicians during office visits.

Methods: We extracted 300 records for RA patients from a unique database of patient-physician interactions (RealHealthData). Using Atlas.ti, we analyzed these records to evaluate how often the recommended assessments of disease activity was documented by physicians during office visits. Results: Most physicians (92%) documented the presence of actively inflamed joints (i.e., tender and swollen joint counts) and evidence of disease progression (i.e., loss of motion, deformity). However, only 28% and 18% documented duration of morning stiffness and fatigue respectively. And while limitation of function is explored, only 11% documented the degree of joint pain via a visual analog scale. Lastly, it was rare for physicians to document their own global assessment of disease activity (5%) or the patient’s global assessment of disease activity (8%)

Conclusions: Lastly, it was rare for physicians to document their own global assessment of disease activity (5%) or the patient’s global assessment of disease activity (8%). RA is a disease that requires systematic and regular evaluation of disease activity and patient assessments to help limit joint damage and functional loss. Successful treatment includes systematic and regular evaluation of disease activity and patient assessments to help limit joint damage and functional loss.

The more we know about patients’ reported symptoms and outcomes, the more we can actively plan and organize research, development and outreach that is patient-centric and clinically meaningful. Successful treatment includes systematic and regular evaluation of disease activity and patient assessments to help limit joint damage and functional loss. The more we know about patients’ reported symptoms and outcomes, the more we can actively plan and organize research, development and outreach that is patient-centric and clinically meaningful.

References


ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This was a joint effort between Strategic Market Insight and RealHealthData.