

Supplement 1: Exclusion criteria for the CareRA study

Exclusion criteria included:

- previous treatment with MTX, LEF, cyclophosphamide, azathioprine, cyclosporine, SSZ for more than three weeks, HCQ for more than six weeks,
- oral GCs at a dosage of more than 10 mg prednisone or dosage equivalent within four weeks before baseline
- oral GCs at a dosage equal to or less than 10 mg prednisone or dosage equivalent within two weeks before baseline, oral GCs for more than four weeks, intra-articular GCs within four weeks before baseline or an investigational drug for the treatment or prevention of RA.
- contra indications for GCs
- contra indication for MTX, SSZ or LEF
 - ✓ chronic hepatic diseases
 - ✓ pulmonary interstitial disease or fibrosis,
 - ✓ chronic renal failure
 - ✓ history of malignant neoplasm within five years
 - ✓ hematologic problemsat the discretion of the investigator
- patients with psoriatic arthritis
- Underlying cardiac, pulmonary, metabolic, renal or gastrointestinal conditions, chronic or latent infectious diseases or immune deficiency which in the opinion of the investigator places the patient at an unacceptable risk for participation in the study
- Pregnancy
- breastfeeding
- no use of a reliable method of contraception.