

# The Heart of the Matter: Cardiovascular Risk in RA

## Risk

Patients with RA have a **50% higher risk of CVD death**, compared to the general population<sup>1,a</sup>

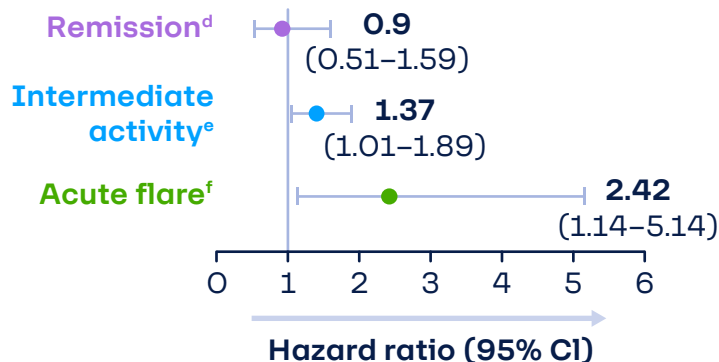


Up to 30% of CVD risk is **attributed to RA disease characteristics** (e.g., disease severity, seropositivity, CRP, and ESR)<sup>2,b</sup>

## Disease Control

Achieving remission can reduce CVD risk<sup>3</sup>

CVD risk at different stages of RA disease activity:<sup>c</sup>



## Comorbidities such as:

Smoking



High blood pressure



Diabetes



can also contribute to CVD risk in patients with RA<sup>2</sup>

**RA disease control can improve CVD risk, contributing to an improvement in overall patient health and wellness<sup>7–10</sup>**

**Better disease control in recent decades has led to improved CVD outcomes<sup>4–6</sup>**



## Management<sup>11</sup>

- ✓ Start DMARDs as soon as RA is diagnosed
- ✓ Educate patients with RA on CVD risk
- ✓ Emphasize the benefits of a healthy diet, regular exercise and smoking cessation
- ✓ Assess CVD risk every ≤5 years, including lipid level assessment
- ✓ Adapt CVD risk calculators for RA; multiply by 1.5x for RA
- ✓ Co-manage with a team, including cardiologists and PCPs<sup>12</sup>

**Sustained remission or LDA is the goal in every patient<sup>11,13,14</sup>**

<sup>a</sup>From a meta-analysis of 24 case-controlled and cohort studies ranging from 1970–2005 with a total of 111,758 patients; <sup>b</sup>Attributable risk in males and females assessed in a combination of 13 cohorts of patients with RA from 10 different countries (n=5638, followed-up for a mean of 5.8 years); <sup>c</sup>Records analysis of 525 patients with RA and 524 age- and sex-matched controls, patients in Minnesota were diagnosed 1988–2007 and followed through 2012; <sup>d</sup>Remission defined as absence of disease activity based on TJC=0, SJC=0, and ESR ≤10 mm/hr, or TJC and SJC ≤1, and CRP ≤10 mg/L; <sup>e</sup>Visits not classified as remission or flare were considered intermediate activity; <sup>f</sup>Flare defined as any worsening of disease activity leading to change, initiation, or increase of therapy, or expressions such as “flare up”, “ongoing” and “active” in medical records. CI, confidence interval; CRP, C-reactive protein; CV, cardiovascular; CVD, cardiovascular disease; DMARD, disease-modifying antirheumatic drug; ESR, erythrocyte sedimentation rate; LDA, low disease activity; PCP, primary care provider; RA, rheumatoid arthritis; SJC, Swollen Joint Count; TJC, Tender Joint Count.

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