RHEUMATOLOGY

Overview

The practice of Rheumatology is the diagnosis and management of disorders marked by inflammation, degeneration, or metabolic derangement of the connective tissue structures of the body. The educational purpose of this clinic based rotation is for residents to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become competent in the evaluation and care of patients with common rheumatologic disorders, and to learn which patients should be referred to, or managed jointly with, a Rheumatologist. Residents will be exposed to the major areas of rheumatology which should be mastered by a competent general internist. Residents will see patients in Rheumatology clinic under the supervision of a faculty Rheumatologist, and may also have the opportunity to perform supervised inpatient Rheumatology consultations. Services available to assist residents in the care of patients with endocrine problems include full laboratory and phlebotomy services, and full radiologic services. Additional experience in rheumatology is gained through the ambulatory block.

Goals

(All PGY levels)

• To teach residents the degree of rheumatology necessary to be a competent internist; and
• To teach residents the ability to recognize when an internist should consult a rheumatologist.

Objectives

Unless specified, objectives should be met at all levels of training.

Patient Care

• To learn to interview and examine patients with rheumatologic diseases, in an effective, efficient and sensitive manner.
• To obtain accurate and essential medical information from previous medical records, outside facilities, and from primary care providers.
• To effectively examine patients with bursitis, tendinitis, arthritis, and other regional pain disorders.
• To identify certain signs and their possible disease associations.
• To competently perform aspiration and injection of joints and soft tissue.
• To understand the indications for standard radiography.
• To correctly interpret results of screening and diagnostic tests for common rheumatologic disorders.
• To formulate an appropriate differential diagnosis.
• To provide patient focused care that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective.
- To recommend appropriate treatment of common rheumatologic diseases.
- To educate patients about their rheumatologic disease.
- To learn the priorities of medical management that will help to forestall progression of rheumatologic disease.
- To recognize the need for subspecialty consultation by a rheumatologist.

Medical Knowledge
- To expand knowledge of the basic and clinical sciences underlying rheumatologic diseases.
- To broaden knowledge of the pathophysiology of common rheumatologic syndromes.
- To learn to access and critically evaluate current medical information and scientific evidence relevant to a patient's medical illnesses.
- To utilize scientific evidence in determining the best diagnostic approach and therapeutic intervention(s) for a patient with rheumatologic disease.
- To understand the radiographic findings of common rheumatologic disorders and when to use other imaging techniques including bone scan, CT, and MRI.
- To understand the meaning of ESR, RF, ANA's and other serologic tests.
- To understand the actions, interactions, and side effects of medications commonly employed in the treatment of rheumatologic diseases.
- To broaden knowledge in the pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment(s) of rheumatologic diseases.

Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
- To develop a logical and organized approach to the most common rheumatologic syndromes.
- To identify deficiencies in one's knowledge, skills and attitudes in the care of the patient with rheumatologic diseases.
- To develop strategies for correcting deficiencies in one's knowledge, skills and attitudes in the care of the patient with rheumatologic disease.
- To appraise and apply scientific evidence to the care of patients with rheumatologic conditions.
- To review outcomes of patients cared for by the Rheumatology Clinic / rheumatology consult service.
- To evaluate the requesting physician's satisfaction with the services provided by the rheumatology consult service.
- PGY-2/3 To facilitate the learning of interns, students and other health care professionals.
Interpersonal Skills and Communication

- To communicate, in a sensitive and effective manner, with patients with rheumatologic disease.
- To ensure that a patient's questions pertaining to his or her rheumatologic disease(s) have been satisfactorily answered.
- To communicate clearly and effectively with physicians who have requested consultation regarding the reasons for consultation and the specific clinical questions to be addressed.
- To communicate with the patient's primary care physician early and as often as necessary.
- To complete a concise consultation note with clear, detailed recommendations.
- To document completely and legibly the necessary information for daily progress (SOAP) notes, including an assessment of the patient's condition and response to therapy, and a plan for ongoing care.
- To ensure that all questions asked by the consulting/requesting team have been satisfactorily answered.
- To communicate with the nursing staff and other members of the patients’ health care team to ensure that the plan of care is understood and implemented.
- PGY-2/3 To obtain the skills necessary to present topics informally and formally to a group.

Professionalism

- To be professional in all interactions with patients, families, colleagues and all members of the health care team.
- To demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors toward patients, families, colleagues and other members of the health care team.
- To maintain a professional appearance at all times.
- To be punctual for rounds, scheduled meetings and conferences, and to fulfill consult requests in a timely fashion.
- To demonstrate a commitment to excellence and to ethical principles of care.
- To ensure patient understanding of their rheumatologic disease and consent to treatment plans.
- To maintain confidentiality of patient information.
- To demonstrate respect for alternative, but appropriate treatment plans recommended by one's resident and faculty colleagues.
- PGY-2/3 To role model professional behaviors and to facilitate professionalism among students and interns.

Systems-Based Practice

- To demonstrate awareness of interdependencies in the health care system that affect quality of care.
- To work with interdisciplinary teams to improve patient care.
- To assist the requesting service in the coordination of their patient’s care.
- To assist with scheduling of any tests, treatments or physician appointments to ensure that effective, continuous medical care is accomplished.
• To use evidence-based, cost conscious strategies in the medical care of patients.
• To advocate for high quality patient care.

**Knowledge to be assessed**

The resident should have knowledge and understanding of the pathophysiology, clinical features, diagnosis, and treatment for the following medical / rheumatologic conditions (though not exclusively):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crystal-induced synovitis</th>
<th>Polymyalgia rheumatica</th>
<th>Vascularitis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degenerative joint disease</td>
<td>Regional pain syndromes</td>
<td>Polyarteritis and hypersensitivity angiitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fibromyalgia</td>
<td>Acute or chronic bursitis (hip, shoulder, knee)</td>
<td>Temporal arteritis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inflammatory Myopathy</td>
<td>Acute or chronic tendonitis (shoulder, elbow, wrist)</td>
<td>Rheumatologic Manifestations of some systemic diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Occupational/sports-related overuse syndromes</em></td>
<td>Back, neck pain</td>
<td>(Sarcoidosis, Malignancies, Amyloidosis, Endocrinopathies and Hemoglobinopathies)</td>
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<td>Achilles’ tendonitis</td>
<td>Foot pain</td>
<td>Basic pharmacology, mechanisms of action, uses, adverse affects and monitoring of the following drugs:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iliotibial band</td>
<td>Rheumatoid arthritis</td>
<td>• NSAIDS and other analgesic</td>
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<td>Lateral epicondylitis</td>
<td>Scleroderma and associated fibrotic disorders</td>
<td>• Corticosteroids</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plantar fascitis</td>
<td>Septic arthritis</td>
<td>• Slow-acting anti-rheumatic and cytotoxic drugs</td>
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<td>Rotator cuff tendonitis</td>
<td>Gonococcal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trochanteric bursitis</td>
<td>Nontongonococcal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Osteomyelitis</td>
<td>Seronegative spondyloarthritis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Osteoporosis and complications</td>
<td>Sjogren’s Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polymyositis/Dermatomyositis and Inclusion body myositis</td>
<td>Systemic lupus erythematosus</td>
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**Procedural Skills**

• Arthrocentesis
• Joint injection
• Soft tissue injection

**Methods of achieving objectives**

• Direct patient care under the supervision of the Rheumatology Attending (Rheumatology Clinic and consult rounds).
• Didactic (teaching) sessions with the Attending Rheumatologist.
• Core Noon Conference series.
• Self study using any one of several recommended basic (reference) textbooks of clinical rheumatology:
  - Primer on Rheumatic Diseases 12th edition
  - Rheumatology for the house Officer
• Selected handouts and journal articles on pertinent topics (provided by the Rheumatology Attending).
• OU-Tulsa library electronic databases and computerized resources.
**Assessment tools**

- The supervising rheumatology attending will monitor all aspects of a resident's performance in Rheumatology Clinic.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will evaluate each resident's history and physical examination of patients daily.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will review and critique resident clinic/consult notes daily.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will critique each resident's assessment and plan pertaining to the rheumatologic problem being addressed.
- The rheumatology attending will assess and monitor each resident's skill in the interpretation of lab results and other diagnostic data.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will monitor each resident's interaction with patients and other health care team members.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will assess and monitor each resident's self-directed learning efforts.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will assess resident fulfillment of the objectives detailed above.

**Evaluation process**

- Faculty and resident will review the goals and objectives at the beginning of the rotation. Each resident will sign an attestation statement verifying review of the goals and objectives.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will provide verbal feedback throughout and at the completion of the rotation.
- The supervising rheumatology attending will complete a formal evaluation through MyEvaluations.com at the conclusion of the rotation.
- Each resident will acknowledge review of their final evaluation through MyEvaluations.com.
- Each resident will enter procedures performed under the supervision of the attending rheumatologist into MyEvaluations.com for signature by the supervising rheumatologist.

**Teaching Faculty**

Lawrence Jacobs, MD  
Robert L. Wortmann, MD

This document was reviewed by the faculty of the Department of Medicine OUCMT 9/06 who approve and support the contents.