# Week 4 Discussion Team C Worksheet

Ms. M. is 42 years old and has had rheumatoid arthritis for 6 years. At baseline, her fingers are stiff and show slight ulnar deviation. She has come to see you as she is currently experiencing an exacerbation, and her wrists are red and swollen. She finds it to be painful when something such as clothing touches the skin over her wrists. Her elbows and knees are also stiff and painful, especially after she has been resting. She is feeling extremely tired and depressed and has not been eating well.

1. Describe the pathophysiologic process that leads to the appearance and the pain occurring at her wrists. Is this an acute or chronic process? Could it be both?
2. Describe the pathophysiology contributing to the stiff, deformed fingers. What terms can be used to describe this?
3. Explain why some activity relieves the pain and stiffness of rheumatoid arthritis and why it tends to be worse with immobility. Is this true for other inflammatory or musculoskeletal conditions?
4. Describe several factors contributing to the systemic symptoms noted in Ms. W.P. Is this an acute or chronic process?
5. Explain how each of the following medications interact with the pathophysiology of rheumatoid arthritis and help return Ms. M. to a more homeostatic state.
   1. NSAIDs
   2. Glucocorticoids
   3. Disease-modifying agents
   4. Biologic agents.
6. If we didn’t already know that Ms. M. had rheumatoid arthritis, what other conditions would be on the differential for this patient? Think about what other conditions can present with erythematous, painful, swollen joints. Identify 2 such conditions and describe the most common signs and symptoms.
7. What are some possible long-term effects of chronic inflammation in conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory conditions?