

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION WOMEN PHYSICIANS SECTION

Resolution: 1
(November 2022)

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Subject: Access to Methotrexate Based on Clinical Decisions

1 Whereas, Methotrexate is a medication used to treat many medical conditions including, but not
2 limited to, cancer, psoriasis, myasthenia gravis, and various autoimmune diseases;^{1,2,3} and

4 Whereas, Methotrexate has remained a cornerstone in treatment specifically for rheumatoid
5 arthritis (RA) and common rheumatic disorders with 90% of RA patients using methotrexate
6 alone or in combination with other medications at some point in their treatment;⁴ and

8 Whereas, Autoimmune disorders are twice as prevalent in women, and RA rates are typically
9 two-to-three times higher in women than men;^{5,6} and

10 Whereas, Methotrexate may also be used be used, off-label, alone or in combination with
11 mifepristone as a non-invasive alternative method for early medical pregnancy terminations and
12 treatment of ectopic pregnancies;^{7,8} and

15 Whereas, The Supreme Court ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization
16 revoked the constitutional right to abortion;⁹ and

18 Whereas, Because methotrexate "can cause a pregnancy to terminate, some pharmacists in
19 states that have added further restrictions that limit or ban abortions may hesitate to fill
20 methotrexate prescriptions for women of childbearing age because of legal concerns";^{10,11} and

22 Whereas, Two large United States pharmacy chains have "instructed their pharmacists to
23 confirm methotrexate will not be used to terminate a pregnancy before dispensing it to people in
24 states that ban abortion in many circumstances";¹² and

26 Whereas, As an example of numerous accounts of refusal of methotrexate, in interviews with
27 CNN, a Maryland woman with Crohn's disease said her health insurance plan informed her they
28 would no longer cover her methotrexate prescription, and a Virginia woman with lupus said her
29 rheumatologist told her she would need to be weaned off methotrexate and switched to another
30 drug due to legal concerns;^{11,14} and

32 Whereas, Restricting access to methotrexate based on non-clinical decisions can lead to
33 unintended consequences, including worsening health conditions, suffering, and death for
34 patients that cannot safely access methotrexate; and

36 Whereas, Restricting access to methotrexate may impact the health and safety of female
37 patients, who are disproportionately affected by health conditions that could be treated using
38 methotrexate; and

40 Whereas, Methotrexate is on the World Health Organization's list of essential medicines for a
41 basic health-care system due to efficacy, safety, and cost-effectiveness;¹³ and

1 Whereas, Our AMA issued a statement regarding state laws that limit patient access to
2 medically necessary treatment and impede use of professional judgment by physicians;¹⁵
3 therefore be it

4
5 RESOLVED, That our AMA work to create a formal process to review pharmaceutical practices
6 related to refusal of methotrexate and other drugs on the basis that it could be used off-label for
7 pregnancy termination (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

8
9 RESOLVED, That our AMA work to provide educational guidance on state-specific laws that
10 have impacted the distribution of methotrexate given post Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health
11 Organization restrictions. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal note: TBD

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Relevant AMA Policy:

[Patient Access to Treatments Prescribed by Their Physicians H-120.988](#)

[Establishing A Task Force to Preserve the Patient-Physician Relationship When Evidence-Based, Appropriate Care Is Banned or Restricted G-605.009](#)

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