

## AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION WOMEN PHYSICIANS SECTION

Resolution: 1  
(November 2022)

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Subject: Access to Methotrexate Based on Clinical Decisions

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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;<sup>1,2,3</sup> and  
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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;<sup>4</sup> and  
7

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;<sup>5,6</sup> and  
10

11 Whereas, Methotrexate may also be used, off-label, alone or in combination with  
12 mifepristone as a non-invasive alternative method for early medical pregnancy terminations and  
13 treatment of ectopic pregnancies;<sup>7,8</sup> and  
14

15 Whereas, The Supreme Court ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*  
16 revoked the constitutional right to abortion;<sup>9</sup> and  
17

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";<sup>10,11</sup> and  
21

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,";<sup>12</sup> and  
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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;<sup>11,14</sup> and  
31

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  
35

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  
39

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;<sup>13</sup> and

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

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

RESOLVED, That our AMA work to provide educational guidance on state-specific laws that have impacted the distribution of methotrexate given post Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health 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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