



*A guide to your new rheumatoid arthritis therapy with ORENCIA® and the ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM®*



## Welcome to ORENCIA and the ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM

*Supporting You  
Every Step of the Way*



# Welcome to ORENCIA and the ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM

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This booklet is designed to help you better understand rheumatoid arthritis (RA), including facts about your condition and the symptoms you may be experiencing.

You will also learn about your RA treatment called ORENCIA.

**Remember, you are not alone. The ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM provides an entire support team of real people ready to help you with every aspect of your treatment journey.**

With the ORP and **www.myORP.ca**, support to help you manage your RA is just a phone call (toll-free 1-877-979-3200) or a click away.

## My Healthcare Team

Write down the contact information (phone number, email, etc.) for the members of your healthcare team so you have them altogether in a handy place:

Rheumatologist: .....

Clinic nurse: .....

Pharmacist: .....

Case Manager: .....



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# What is rheumatoid arthritis (RA)?

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Your immune system defends your body against attack by bacteria and viruses. Normally, your immune system leaves healthy body tissues alone. In people with RA however, the immune system attacks normal body tissues. This can cause damage and inflammation, especially in the tissues of your joints. For this reason, RA is known as both an autoimmune disorder and an inflammatory form of arthritis.

## Fast RA facts

- RA affects women more than men, with about 3 women having it for every 1 man
- Overall, it affects approximately 1% of the population – around 300,000 Canadians
- RA usually appears between the ages of 25 to 50

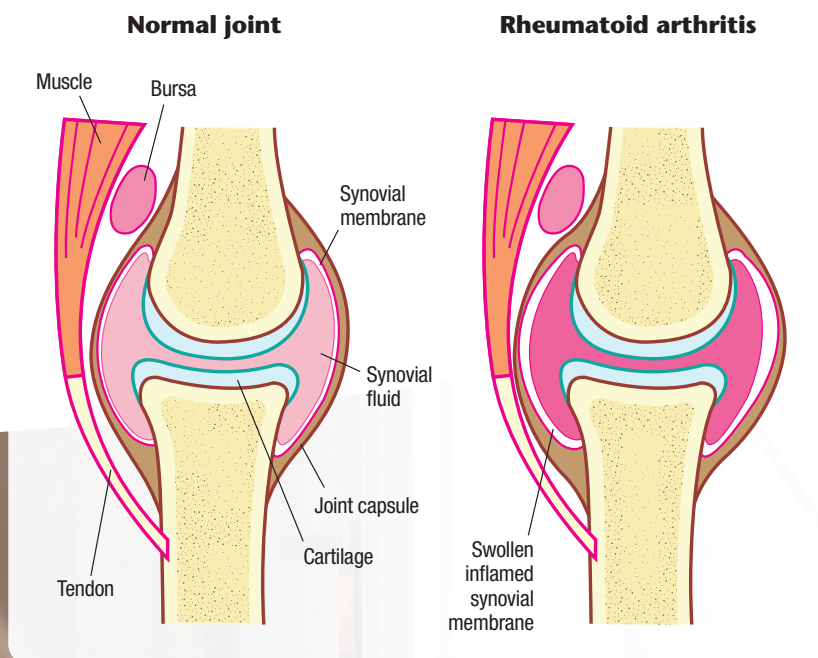




# What's happening in my body when I have RA?

RA usually begins slowly, starting in a few joints and then spreading to other joints over weeks and months. With time, RA affects increasing numbers of joints on both sides of the body in a “symmetrical” pattern.

RA occurs when your immune system attacks the synovium, which is the lining of the membranes that surround your joints. The body reacts to the attack with inflammation, which thickens the synovium. This process can eventually destroy the cartilage and bone.



# Why have I been prescribed ORENCIA?

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ORENCIA is prescribed by doctors to treat adults with moderate-to-severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Your doctor has decided to treat you with ORENCIA because your disease is still active even though you have tried other treatments.

RA is a disease that causes pain, tenderness and swelling in your joints and can also damage your joints.

## How does ORENCIA work?

ORENCIA keeps the immune system from attacking healthy parts of your body.

The immune system is the body's defense against attacks, such as infections. A normal immune system leaves the healthy parts of your body alone.

In people with RA, the immune system attacks normal body tissues. This can cause pain and swelling especially in and around your joints.

ORENCIA helps reduce joint pain and swelling as well as the damage to your bones and cartilage caused by RA. ORENCIA may also make it easier for you to do your daily activities (such as getting dressed, walking and climbing stairs).

ORENCIA can make it harder for your body to fight infection. ORENCIA treatment can make you more likely to get infections or make any infection you have worse. It is important to tell your doctor if you think you have any infections, like a cold, flu, infected cuts, etc.

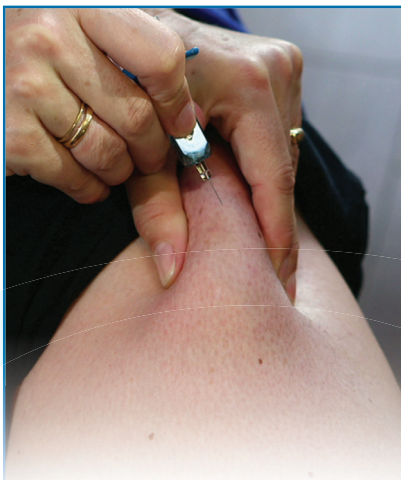
# How do I take ORENCIA?

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ORENCIA is administered two different ways:



*Intravenous  
infusion (IV)*



*Subcutaneous  
injection (SC)*

 **ORENCIA<sup>®</sup>**  
(abatacept)


# Intravenous administration

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ORENCIA will be given to you by your doctor or other healthcare professional using an IV. This is called an infusion. This means the medicine will be given to you through a needle placed in a vein in your arm. It will take about 30 minutes to give you the full dose of medicine.

You will receive your first dose of ORENCIA followed by additional doses at 2 and 4 weeks after the first dose. You will then receive a dose every 4 weeks.

You do not have to make any special preparations the day before you receive ORENCIA IV. When you receive your first infusion, you should make sure to bring someone with you who can drive you home.



If you miss your appointment or if you forget to receive your ORENCIA infusion, *ask your doctor or Case Manager when to schedule your next dose.*



# Subcutaneous administration

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Your doctor has prescribed subcutaneous ORENCIA for you, which means that it's an injection given under the skin.

ORENCIA subcutaneous (SC) is injected once a week.

Treatment with ORENCIA may start with one intravenous (IV) dose given the same day as your first ORENCIA SC injection. Thereafter you will continue with once-weekly SC injections.

Your first ORENCIA SC dose should be given by your healthcare provider. If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver may be able to give your injections of ORENCIA at home, you should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject ORENCIA. Do not try to inject ORENCIA yourself until you have been shown the right way to give the injections by your healthcare provider or a nurse from the ORP.

If you forget to receive your ORENCIA injection, ask your doctor when to take your next SC injection.



# Surrounding you with support with the ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM

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Starting on a treatment isn't something that you have to do alone. You don't have to figure it out by yourself, feel lost, or feel anxious because you're not sure about something.

The **ORP** is here for you. The ORP's mission is to help you access your prescribed ORENCIA as soon as possible and to assist you with every aspect of your treatment journey.

Now that you are enrolled in the ORP, your Case Manager will keep you connected and help put your mind at ease by assisting you with many of the things you may have questions about when taking ORENCIA, such as:

- Getting nursing support\*
- Where and when you will receive your medication
  - If you are receiving ORENCIA IV, your infusion will be done at an infusion clinic
- Insurance counseling and support with reimbursement
- Exploring options for reducing costs
- For the subcutaneous injection option, training on self-injection by a qualified nurse
- Subcutaneous syringe disposal
- Support when traveling with ORENCIA and travel cold cases
- Coordination of drug ordering with local pharmacies
- Treatment starter kits

\* The nurse cannot provide medical advice. Your doctor is the best source of information about your health.

# Case Manager Support

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We understand that you may have questions, especially when first starting ORENCIA or even later on in your treatment.

*Sometimes it's helpful to talk to an experienced Case Manager when you have questions about treatment with ORENCIA.*



Your Case Manager is available to answer any of your questions about ORENCIA treatment.

With your Case Manager ready to help you, you can be sure that your questions about ORENCIA are being heard by specially trained professionals. Don't hesitate to contact your personal Case Manager and ask to speak with a nurse\* if you would like.

You are the reason they are at the other end of the line.

**Call the ORP at 1-877-979-3200 and connect with an ORENCIA team member!**

\* The nurse cannot provide medical advice. Your doctor is the best source of information about your health.

Nursing support is available Monday through Friday and your call will be returned within 1 business day.

# Insurance Counseling

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*Starting on ORENCIA? Change in your health insurance? It's such a complicated world of forms and authorizations. Need help figuring it out?*

## The ORP can help.

Our Case Managers are here to answer questions you may have about your insurance coverage and co-pay for ORENCIA. They can contact your health insurance company to verify your benefits and determine whether ORENCIA is covered by your plan. In addition, they can help you seek prior authorization, if needed.

For people whose insurance doesn't fully cover the cost of ORENCIA, or for people who don't have insurance, your Case Manager can search for options that may provide access to ORENCIA for you. In some situations, this could include co-pay assistance, referrals to Patient Assistance Programs or other independent assistance programs that are there to help.

Just call 1-877-979-3200 and ask  
to talk to ***your Case Manager.***





# What is [www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca)?

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Your doctor, pharmacist and/or other healthcare professional are the first line of support to help you manage your disease.

In addition, you can visit [www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca) for information about the ORP, ORENCIA and RA.

To access the site, the ORENCIA drug identification number (DIN) is required. Please enter **2282097**.

## Features of [www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca) include:

- General information about RA
- Tips on living with RA, including advice on diet and exercise
- Other useful links to assist you in managing your RA
- Travel assistance and arrangements



If you have questions about ORP or ORENCIA, *visit [www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca)*

# What about my lifestyle?

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Physical activity, use of heat and cold, protecting your joints, relaxation and healthy eating are some of the ways you can manage your RA.

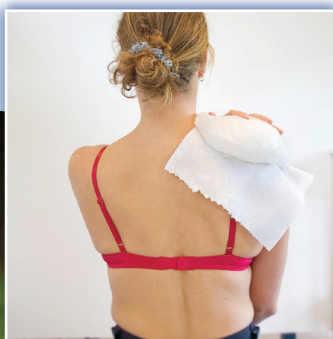
Your best source of information about lifestyle management is your RA healthcare team. Ask your doctor or other healthcare professional to help you develop a personalized plan.

## Consider heat and cold

- **Heat:** Taking a warm shower and using warm packs are great ways to help reduce pain and stiffness. Heat should not be applied to a swollen joint.
- **Cold:** You can use a cold pack to help reduce pain and swelling.

Always use a protective barrier, such as a towel, between the warm or cold pack and the skin.

*For more information, visit [www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca)*



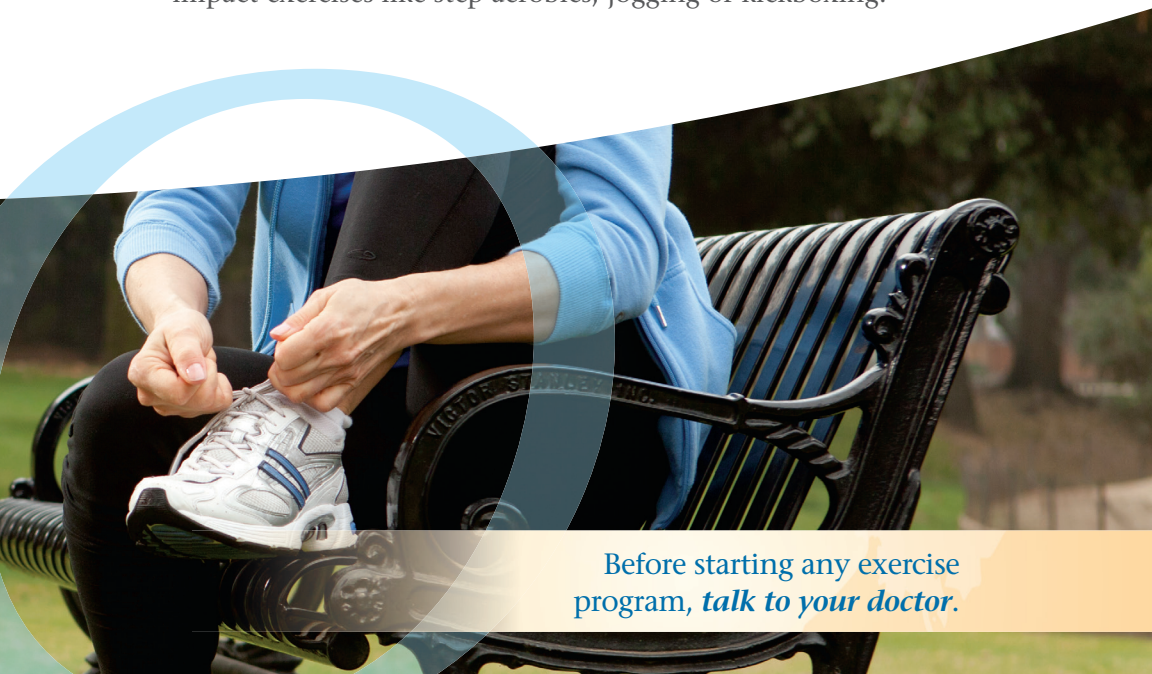
# Why is physical activity important?

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Physical activity helps protect joints by strengthening the muscles around them, so it's important that you try to fit some into your daily routine.

## Some exercises you could try are:

- **Range of motion exercises** help reduce pain and stiffness and keep your joints moving.
- **Strengthening exercises** help maintain or increase muscle tone and can protect your joints.
- **Moderate stretching exercises** help relieve pain and keep the muscles and tendons around an affected joint flexible.
- **Endurance exercises such as** walking, swimming and cycling, strengthen your heart, give you energy, control your weight and help you feel better overall. It is best to avoid high-impact exercises like step aerobics, jogging or kickboxing.



Before starting any exercise program, *talk to your doctor.*







# More tips for protecting your joints

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Try not to overly stress your joints.

- Alternate heavy or repeated tasks with lighter tasks.
- When lifting or carrying heavy items, keep the items at waist level and avoid carrying them up and down stairs.
- Talk to your doctor about seeing an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, who may prescribe splints, braces or orthotics (shoe inserts) to help align and support your joints.
- Try using a reacher to pick up items from the ground, a motorized can opener, a jar grip and other assistive devices.



Adapted from The Arthritis Society

## Relaxation is important

Relaxing the muscles around a sore joint can help reduce pain. There are many ways to relax, such as deep breathing exercises or listening to music or relaxation tapes.

## Make sure to eat well

Being overweight puts an extra burden on your weight-bearing joints (back, hips, knees, ankles and feet). If you are overweight and have arthritis, consider a balanced diet as a way to help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

# Important safety information

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**You should not take ORENCIA if you have:**

- ever had an allergic reaction to ORENCIA
- an infection that has spread through your body (sepsis)

## Is there any risk of serious side effects while I'm on ORENCIA?

**Serious infections:** There have been some cases where patients receiving ORENCIA, or other RA biologic treatment, have developed serious infections, including tuberculosis (TB) and infections caused by viruses, bacteria, or fungi.

**Cancer:** During the clinical trials, though certain kinds of cancer have been reported in patients treated with ORENCIA, these case reports are regarded as uncommon. Lung cancer and cancer of the lymph glands were reported more often in patients treated with ORENCIA than in patients treated with placebo. The current number of reported cancer cases in the ORENCIA studies appears to be consistent with the expected number of cancer cases reported in the RA population. People with more serious RA that have had the disease for a long time may have a higher than average risk of getting a kind of cancer that affects the lymph system, called lymphoma. If you take ORENCIA or other RA biologic treatment, your risk may increase. The role of ORENCIA in the development of cancer is not known.

There have been reports of certain kinds of skin cancer in patients taking ORENCIA. Some patients receiving ORENCIA have developed types of cancer called non-melanoma skin cancer. If any changes in the healing or the appearance of your skin or growths on your skin occur during or after your treatment with ORENCIA, tell your doctor.

**Allergic reactions:** If you develop a severe rash, chest pain, swollen face or difficulty breathing during or after receiving ORENCIA, call your doctor immediately. The SC syringe components do not contain any latex or dry natural rubber.

# What are the most common side effects of ORENCIA?

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Like all medicines that affect your immune system, ORENCIA can cause side effects, some of which may be serious.

The more common side effects with ORENCIA are headache, upper respiratory tract infection, sore throat, and nausea. Infusion-related reactions were infrequent during the clinical studies with ORENCIA.

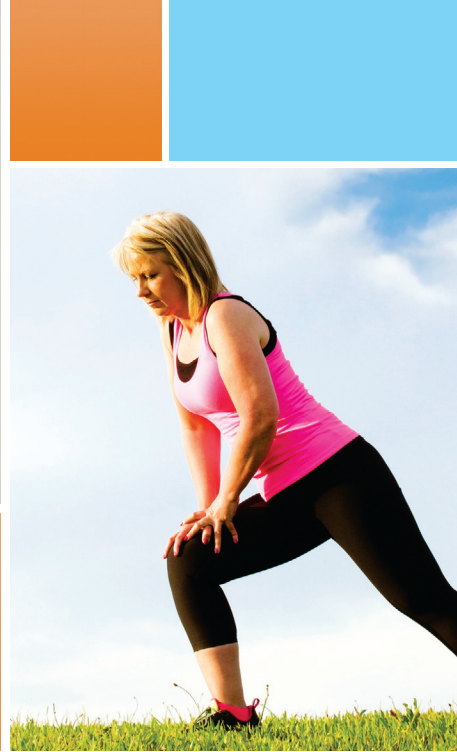
Uncommon serious side effects occurring in less than 1% of people include:

- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Cellulitis (skin infection)
- Urinary tract infection
- Bronchitis (lung infection)
- Diverticulitis (infection of large intestine)
- Pyelonephritis (kidney infection)

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any symptoms of an infection.

This is not a complete list of side effects. If you have any unexpected effects while taking ORENCIA, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

**If you are not sure or have any questions about any of this information, *ask your doctor.***



## ORENCIA RESPONSE PROGRAM

*Keeping the needs of ORENCIA patients in mind*

Visit  
[www.myORP.ca](http://www.myORP.ca)

DIN: 2282097

## For more information about RA

The following links will direct you to websites with additional information on RA, living with RA and managing your RA.

- The Arthritis Society of Canada, [www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca)
- The Canadian Arthritis Network, [www.arthritisnetwork.ca](http://www.arthritisnetwork.ca)
- Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE), <http://www.jointhehealth.org/>
- Rheumatology Resource, [rheuminfo.com/](http://rheuminfo.com/)

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