



Patient & Family Guide  
2019

# Welcome to the Rheumatology Clinic



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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Welcome to the Rheumatology Clinic at the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation & Arthritis Centre (Rehab Centre).

Rheumatic diseases cause inflammation or pain in muscles, joints, or tissue. Some rheumatic diseases can also affect the organs. Rheumatic diseases affect everyone differently. Your health care team will work with you to decide which treatment is best for you. Your health care team includes your family doctor and/or nurse practitioner (NP), the rheumatologist, Clinic nurses, and staff.

As the Clinic is part of NSHA and Dalhousie University, you may also be seen by medical students or doctors in training. You may also be asked if you would like to take part in clinical research projects involving rheumatic diseases. This is up to you. The care you receive will not be affected by whether or not you choose to take part.

Your family doctor and/or NP is your primary care doctor. Please see them as usual for any health concerns. They can contact the rheumatologist for guidance, if needed.

One of the Clinic nurses may call to give you more info about your diagnosis. The nurse may also teach you about your medication if:

- › you have received a new diagnosis
- › you have started a new medication
- › this is your first visit to the Clinic

## **Helpful tips for your Clinic visit**

### **Before your visit**

- Ask your pharmacist if any of the medications your rheumatologist prescribed need a refill. Bring the list with you and ask the rheumatologist for prescriptions for these medications during your appointment.
- Bring a list of all of the medications you take, including over-the-counter medications (bought **without** a prescription), vitamins, and supplements.
- Plan to arrive 15-20 minutes early to find parking and register for your appointment.

## **During your visit**

- Ask your rheumatologist for any test results. We do not give test results over the phone.
- Be open and honest with the team about how you are feeling, your symptoms, and how you take your medication. This is important so we can find the best ways to help you feel as well as possible.

## **If you need to talk to Clinic staff, please call the Rheumatology Clinic phone line at 902-473-4161 and choose one of the following options:**

- › Press 1 to book, change, or cancel an appointment.
- › Press 2 if you are a new patient and you want to confirm an appointment or check on your referral.
- › Press 3 to talk to a nurse about a medical issue.

## **Please note:**

- If you call to change an appointment, we may not call you back. A new appointment time will be sent to you in the mail. This may take up to 2 or 3 weeks. We will offer you the next available appointment, but please keep in mind availability may be limited.

- If a blood collection requisition form is needed, the requisition form will be sent to you in the mail with your next followup appointment info.
- **If you do not receive your appointment and/or requisition form after 3 weeks, please call 902-473-4161.**
- **If you have to cancel your appointment, please call 902-473-4161 (press 1) at least 48 hours before your appointment.** If you do not call to cancel, we will not automatically reschedule your appointment. Please make every effort to book, attend, and rebook your appointments. This helps us plan your care, as well as help other patients at the Clinic.

**You can find more info about the type of rheumatic disease you have on the following websites:**

RheumInfo

› <https://rheuminfo.com>

The Arthritis Society of Canada

› [www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca)

## Blood Collection Clinics

### Rehab Centre:

If you are a current patient of one of the rheumatology doctors and they gave you a blood collection requisition form, you can get your blood work done at the Rehab Centre.

- **Hours:**

- › Monday: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. & 1-2:45 p.m.
- › Tuesday: 1-4:30 p.m.
- › **Wednesday: closed**
- › Thursday: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. & 1-2:45 p.m.
- › **Friday: closed**
- › **Weekends and holidays: closed**

### Bayers Road Centre:

7071 Bayers Road, Suite 141

Halifax, NS B3L 2C2

Phone: 902-454-1661

- **Hours:**

- › Monday to Thursday: 7 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
- › Friday: 7 a.m.-4 p.m.
- › Saturday: 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- › **Holidays: closed**

