

Upadacitinib tops abatacept for RA refractory to DMARDs

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(HealthDay)—Upadacitinib is superior to abatacept for patients with

rheumatoid arthritis refractory to biologic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs), according to a study published online Oct. 15 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Andrea Rubbert-Roth, M.D., from Cantonal Clinic St. Gallen in Switzerland, and colleagues conducted a 24-week phase 3 trial involving [patients](#) with rheumatoid arthritis refractory to DMARDs. Patients were randomly assigned to receive either oral upadacitinib or intravenous abatacept, each in combination with stable synthetic DMARDs (303 and 309 patients, respectively).

The researchers found that from baseline, mean change in the composite Disease Activity Score for 28 joints based on the C-reactive protein level at week 12 was -2.52 and -2.00 , respectively, in the upadacitinib and abatacept groups (difference, -0.52 points; 95 percent confidence interval, -0.69 to -0.35 ; P

"Additional data from longer and larger trials are needed to better understand long-term outcomes and safety of upadacitinib as compared with other drugs for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed ties to the [pharmaceutical industry](#), including AbbVie, which manufactures [upadacitinib](#) and funded the study.

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