

RHEUMATOLOGY CONSULT POLICY

1. All consults must be seen and staffed within 24 hr (same day if consult is received in the morning). If the person calling the consult says the consult is not urgent and/or can be seen the next day, the fellow must determine the location of the consult and the question being asked of rheumatology. If the consult is from a critical care unit and/or if the question being asked is a rheumatologic emergency (e.g., possible septic joint, infection in an immunosuppressed patient, acute monoarthritis, rule out crystal-induced arthritis), then the consult must be seen the same day.
2. Weekdays: The fellow assigned to that hospital should call the assigned attending physician upon receipt of the request (including Friday afternoons), so that the attending will know that the 24-hour clock is ticking and can make appropriate arrangements to staff. The attending must ensure a smooth transition of care to the rheumatologist covering weekends and holidays.
3. Weekends & holidays: The fellow on call should contact the rheumatologist on call upon receipt of the request, so that the rheumatologist can make appropriate arrangements to staff. The on call attending must ensure a smooth transition of care to the weekday consult attending physician.
4. Curbside consults do NOT exist. All consults require notes by fellows and staff, and appropriate signatures.

1/17/06