### Primary Care Assessment

**Inflammatory back pain** (if 4 or more of these present further investigation is indicated)
- Age of onset < 40 years
- Gradual onset
- Improves with exercise
- No improvement with rest
- Pain at night disturbing sleep

**Other features to look out for**
- Buttock and/or lower lumbar pain
- Early morning stiffness > 30 mins
- > 3 months duration of back pain
- Good response to NSAIDs

**Associated features**
- Peripheral joint swelling (mainly in legs)
- Enthesitis (inflammation at tendon insertions e.g. Achilles tendonitis, plantar fasciitis)
- Uveitis, Inflammatory bowel disease, Psoriasis
- Family history of spondyloarthritis

### Referral Advice

**Rationale**
- Average 9 year delay to diagnosis
- New treatments available which improve outcome

**Referral Criteria**
- Any patient with **4 or more Inflammatory back pain features**
  - or
- Peripheral joint synovitis
  - or
- Enthesitis with uveitis/IBD/psoriasis

**Investigations**
- Please send blood for FBC/ESR, U&E/LFT/CRP - the results will be available at the patient’s OP appointment on Clinical Portal
- Pelvis Xray: sacroiliitis may be present but Xrays can be normal in early disease and therefore are not recommended if symptoms < 2 years

### Management

**Specialist review**
- Please refer patients to the rheumatology service
- If the results of investigations taken in Primary Care are available, treatment can be started at the first visit

**Multi-Disciplinary Team**
- All patients will be reviewed by a rheumatology physiotherapist and also by an occupational therapist as required
- Regular review of disease activity and comorbidities will be undertaken
- Patients will be given written educational material and a contact number for a named Clinical Nurse Specialist

**Treatment**
- Regular exercise and specialist rheumatology physio input is crucial for all patients
- Virtually all patients will require NSAID therapy
  - DMARDs are helpful for peripheral joint swelling
  - Biologic therapies are used to treat severe disease

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**Early diagnosis, referral and treatment improves outcomes!**