



NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Organizations are encouraged to download and tailor the following newsletter article to share via e-newsletters, websites, community bulletin boards, or print newsletters. Brackets are included in the template for those who wish to tailor the information to a specific rheumatic disease.



[Sample Newsletter Article](#)

Help Raise Awareness for *[Insert Disease Name]* this September

September 2016 marks the first annual Rheumatic Disease Awareness Month (RDAM), sponsored by the American College of Rheumatology and its national public awareness campaign, Simple Tasks. RDM 2016 is an effort to increase public understanding and awareness of the symptoms, risk factors, treatment options, personal and economic impact, and the lifestyle and healthcare challenges associated with rheumatic diseases. It is also an opportunity to advance the health and well-being of those living with rheumatic disease by advocating for healthcare policies that help patients access safe, affordable, and effective healthcare.

Hundreds of Diseases. One Voice.

The theme of RDM 2016 is “**Hundreds of Diseases. One Voice.**” Although there are several existing awareness months for specific rheumatic diseases like arthritis, lupus, and Lyme disease, there has never been an awareness month that is inclusive of the 100+ lesser known diseases under the arthritis umbrella term – until now. This is an excellent time for our community to raise awareness about *[Insert disease name]*!

How to Get Involved in RDM 2016

The Simple Tasks website (www.SimpleTasks.org) is a great place to start. Here you will find information about how to participate in RDM 2016 on social media, ideas for hosting a local awareness event, instructions for conducting outreach to your local media and lawmakers, and more!

- ✓ **Host a Local Awareness Event.** The Simple Tasks website has event ideas to get you started!
- ✓ **Send a Letter to the Editor of Your Local Newspaper.** This is a great way to inform community members about *[Insert disease name]* symptoms and treatment options.
- ✓ **Participate on Social Media.** We encourage you to use the official RDM hashtag, **#RDM**, in your social media posts about the month. Simple Tasks will also host weekly #RheumChat Twitter chats on topics related to living with a rheumatic disease. Join one of the chats this September! Or, consider changing your social media profile photo to show solidarity during RDM 2016. You can find more information about RDM 2016 social media initiatives on the Simple Tasks website.
- ✓ **Take Action.** Write an email to your Congressperson or Senator asking them to support healthcare policies that make it easier for people living with *[Insert disease name]* to access safe and effective treatments. You can quickly and easily send a pre-drafted email from the Simple Tasks website, or draft one of your own! You can also ask your local or state government leaders to issue a Rheumatic Disease Awareness Month proclamation. The proclamation can be downloaded directly from the Simple Tasks website.
- ✓ **Tell Your Friends.** Take this opportunity to share information about *[Insert disease name]* symptoms, treatment options, what it's like to live with rheumatic disease, and other awareness information with your online and offline communities. Knowledge is power, so let's start the conversation!

Thank you in advance for helping us spread awareness during Rheumatic Disease Awareness Month. Speaking together with one voice, we can make a positive difference for people living with *[Insert disease name]*.