

specificity for the diagnosis of RA than a positive test for RF. The newer classification criteria also do not take into account whether the patient has rheumatoid nodules or radiographic joint damage because these findings occur rarely in early RA. It is important to emphasize that the 2010 ACR-EULAR criteria are “classification criteria” as opposed to “diagnostic criteria” and serve to distinguish patients at the onset of disease who have a high likelihood of evolution to chronic disease with persistent synovitis and joint damage. The presence of radiographic joint erosions or subcutaneous nodules may inform the diagnosis in the later stages of the disease. About three-fourths of patients with the clinical and radiographic features of RA test positive for RF and/or ACPA (seropositive), while the remaining one-fourth of patients with RA test negative for RF and/or ACPA (seronegative).

TABLE 358-1 Classification Criteria for Rheumatoid Arthritis