The invention provides methods for treating inflammatory diseases by administering to the subject an effective amount of an agent that provides alpha B-crystallin activity, where the dose is effective to suppress or prevent initiation, progression, or relapses of disease, including the progression of established disease. In some embodiments, the methods of the invention comprise administering to a subject having a pre-existing inflammatory disease condition, an effective amount of alpha B-crystallin protein, to suppress or prevent relapses of the disease.