

10 Questions

To ask your doctor about your rheumatoid arthritis (RA)

Good communication with your doctor can improve your health care. All questions are powerful and help build understanding. The more questions you ask, the more you will know your RA and the more control you will have over it.

Below are 2 sets of useful questions:

- For newly diagnosed RA patients
- For RA patients currently on treatment

If you have just been [newly diagnosed with RA](#), you may find the following questions useful to ask your GP or rheumatologist.

1. What do the diagnostic tests and scans show?
2. Do I have high levels of antibodies and what does this mean for me?
3. Would you classify my RA as mild, moderate or severe?
4. What are my treatment goals?
5. What types of medicine will work best for me and why?
6. What benefits can I expect from the medicine and when should it start working?
7. How will I know if my treatment isn't working? What should I do?
8. What are the expected side effects of the medicine(s) and how will they be monitored?
9. Is there anything I need to know if I experience these side effects?
10. How else can I improve my disease and well being?

10 Questions

If you have been receiving [ongoing treatment for your RA](#), you may find the following questions useful to ask your rheumatologist.

1. Is the medicine I'm on keeping my disease in remission or at low disease activity?
2. Has my joint damage got worse?
3. Has there been any change in my lab tests e.g. blood counts, antibodies or inflammatory markers? What does this mean?
4. Is there any way of limiting the side effects I have been experiencing?
5. Has the RA impacted other parts of my body e.g. eyes, skin or heart?
6. Is a biological medicine an appropriate treatment for me? If not, why not?
7. What side effects should I be aware of and are of most concern if I'm on a biologic medicine? What should I do if I experience these side effects?
8. If my treatment is working well, should I reduce the dose or stop taking it?
9. Have there been any new treatments or disease management advances since I last saw you?
10. What other resources or support are available to help me manage my disease?

As time with your doctor is limited, it's a good idea to prepare your questions before your appointment. You may have other important questions - feel free to write these below.
