

A Guide to Talking with Your Doctor



For People Living with Lupus Nephritis

As someone living with lupus nephritis, you understand the many challenges that come with managing your condition. This guide is designed to make things a little easier when you meet with your doctor. Bring it with you to each of your healthcare appointments, so you and your doctor can work together to better understand and manage your lupus nephritis.

Discussion Topics

What do my signs and symptoms mean?

To Discuss:

- Any symptoms you have experienced since your last appointment
- The severity of each symptom (using a 1 to 10 scale)
- How long each symptom lasted
- Whether any new symptoms have developed

To Ask:

- Could a condition other than lupus/lupus nephritis be causing any of my symptoms?
- Could a medication I'm taking be causing these symptoms?

How is lupus nephritis impacting my day-to-day routine?

To Discuss:

- How you have been feeling physically and emotionally
- Any changes in your lifestyle or day-to-day routines since your last appointment
- Any concerns you have about the future

To Ask:

- Are there any lifestyle changes I should make?
- (For women of child-bearing age) How safe would it be for me to become pregnant? Would my treatment need to change if I became pregnant?

Bring These Things with You to Every Appointment



A list of all the prescription and over-the-counter medications and dosages you are taking (including vitamins and supplements)



A copy of your medical records



An appointment buddy—someone who can ask questions of your doctor and take notes for you

How am I responding to treatment?

To Discuss:

- Your experiences—positive and negative—with current medications
- Whether you are taking any new vitamins or supplements

To Ask:

- Do I need to add or remove a medication?
- Do I need to adjust the dose of a medication I am taking?
- Are there any vitamins, supplements, or over-the-counter medications I should be taking?
- Are there clinical trials I should consider?

For any new medications being added:

- Why is this treatment being added?
- What are the benefits and risks of this medication?
- What are the possible side effects of this medication?
- How and when do I take this medication?

What tests can I expect to take in the future?

For any new medications being added:

- What tests should I be getting?
- Why are you recommending this test?
- How safe is this test?

What else can I do to manage my lupus nephritis?

- Has my prognosis changed at all?
- Have you been interacting with the other doctors/specialists on my treatment team?
- Other than taking my medications as directed, what more can I do to manage my lupus nephritis?
- Can you recommend any resources or support groups?
- What do you need from ME so I can help you better manage my lupus nephritis?

