

Facts About Inflammatory Arthritis

There are many types of inflammatory arthritis (IA) including ankylosing spondylitis (AS), psoriatic arthritis (PsA), and rheumatoid arthritis (RA). IA is complicated and can affect you in many ways - physically and emotionally, personally and professionally.¹⁻³ There are many steps you can take with your rheumatologist or healthcare team to deal with how IA is affecting you.¹⁻³ Here are some important things for you to consider:

Even though you don't feel any pain, this doesn't mean your IA is not active.

You know your IA better than anyone. Even if your symptoms seem to be better, your IA may still be active and causing damage to your joints.¹⁻³ This is why it's important for you to see your rheumatologist or healthcare provider regularly and to ask about your IA and how to treat it.¹⁻⁴

The progression of IA can be changed.

Your rheumatologist uses medications to try to slow or change the progression of your IA.¹⁻³ *If your IA is not well-managed over time, it can lead to joint damage that is permanent.*¹⁻³ Early diagnosis of IA is really important so that treatment can be started right away.

Talking to your rheumatologist about how IA affects your daily life is important.

Living with IA can sometimes make common tasks difficult, like opening a jar or turning a doorknob. A global survey called *RA: Join the Fight* found that 57% of people with RA said their RA has negatively affected their ability to do everyday activities.⁵ It is important to talk to your rheumatologist to communicate your personal goals so you can work together to develop a disease management plan to help you be successful.

Joint damage from IA can't be reversed.

The joint damage caused by IA is permanent and can't be reversed or fixed (except with joint replacements in some cases).¹⁻³ Getting diagnosed early to start treatment and develop a plan to manage your IA is very important to help you avoid this.¹⁻³

It's never too late to put together a disease management plan.

Managing IA usually requires many approaches such as physical therapy and medications, to help you maintain joint function, decrease pain, and prevent or limit joint damage.¹⁻⁴ It's important to talk to your rheumatologist or healthcare provider at each appointment to make sure you have a long-term disease management plan that is right for you (even if it's not a formal 'plan'). The *RA: Join the Fight* survey showed that people living with RA who worked with their healthcare provider to manage their RA felt more hopeful and confident compared to people with RA who did not.⁵

Talk to your rheumatologist or healthcare provider.

For anyone living with IA, your rheumatologist or healthcare provider is an important partner in managing your IA. It is important to talk about how IA affects different parts of your life. Your rheumatologist can answer any questions for you.

Some other resources for you.

With support from AbbVie, CAPA has developed some resources for you to help you prepare for your appointment and to give you some ideas about what you might wish to talk to your healthcare team about. You can click [here](#) or on the photos below to access these tools.

Managing
Inflammatory
Arthritis

Making the Most Out of Your Appointment



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What to Discuss with Your Health Care Team



References

- 1) The Arthritis Society. Rheumatoid Arthritis: Know Your Options. <http://www.arthritis.ca/document.doc?id=336>
- 2) The Arthritis Society. Psoriatic Arthritis: Know Your Options. <http://www.arthritis.ca/document.doc?id=335>
- 3) The Arthritis Society. Ankylosing Spondylitis: Know Your Options. <http://www.arthritis.ca/document.doc?id=76>
- 4) Smolen, JS, et al. Ann Rheum Dis. 2010; 69; 631-7.
- 5) Global RA Patient Survey, commissioned by AbbVie and conducted by Harris Interactive, February 14-April 11, 2013.