

Physical Health

How I'm doing

One of the first considerations you should think of before talking to your health care team about your physical health is what your “new normal” is. If you find your “new normal” involves coping on a daily basis with pain, let your team know. Sharing that you're in pain isn't complaining, it's an important diagnostic tool that helps your team understand the current state of your disease.

What to Discuss with Your Health Care Team

If you've been diagnosed with a new condition or have noticed any changes in your skin or nails (psoriasis), high blood pressure, migraines, digestion, bowel changes, eye pain or any other health concerns, let your team know, as this could be an extra-articular manifestation (EAM). EAMs are conditions that can be associated with inflammatory arthritis.

You may also ask your team about the “Treat to Target” approach where the goal is to reach a state of low disease activity by treating inflammatory arthritis to “target”, the point where irreversible joint damage and disability is avoided.



Section 4

Your inflammatory arthritis state

- Are there signs my inflammatory arthritis has progressed since my last visit?
- If so, can we slow or stop this progression by treating my arthritis to target?
- Is there any joint damage?
- What can I do to preserve my joint function?
- Am I experiencing the usual progression of inflammatory arthritis?
- Other questions I may have:

Your pain concerns
(circle level)

- My pain level is:
Low Medium High
 - If I'm not in pain is my inflammatory arthritis well controlled?
 - If pain is an issue, how can we better manage my pain?

Your inflammatory arthritis activity
(circle level)

- How active is my inflammatory arthritis right now:
Low Medium High
 - If this isn't where it should be, what should we do?

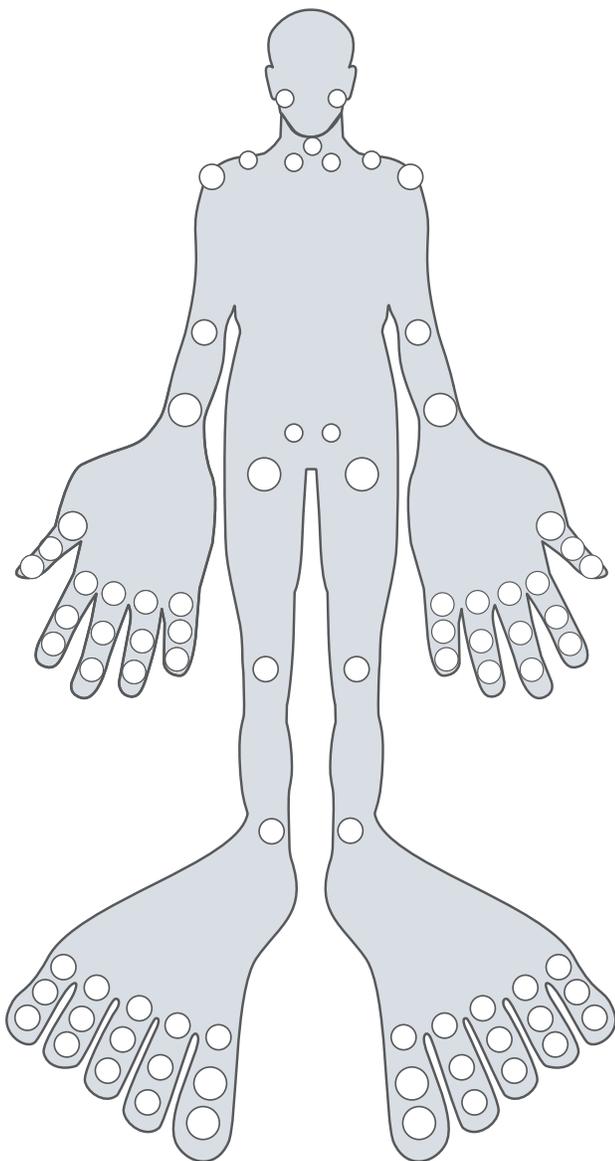
Your fatigue level
(circle level)

- My daily fatigue level is:
Low Medium High

Your sleep patterns
(circle answers)

- I am able to sleep through the night
Yes No Sometimes
- I often wake up during the night because of pain
Yes No Sometimes
- The last night I had an interrupted night of sleep was:

Chart your inflammatory arthritis activity by circling where your joints are swollen. Inflammatory arthritis often causes the affected joints to be stiff, painful, sore, and warm to the touch. Some people experience a burning-like feeling in their joints.



For additional facts about inflammatory arthritis go to: <http://www.arthritis.ca/document.doc?id=925>

Your treatment

- Can we address the concerns I'm having with my treatment?
- Should I start taking something else?
- Why am I on so many medications?
- Can you explain what each medication does?
- What happens if I don't take my medications?

Your health changes

- I was recently diagnosed with _____
- I recently sustained an injury _____
- I've started a new treatment for my _____
- Will this interact with my inflammatory arthritis care?

Arthritis health facts

- 8 in 10 Canadians living with arthritis have additional chronic conditions
- Other chronic conditions include: back problems, high blood pressure, migraines, asthma, diabetes, heart disease, bowel disorders, urinary incontinence, ulcers, cancer and strokes.
- Make a note of any other conditions you may have and any medication you may be taking and share it with your health care team
