

Background

The Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance is a grass-roots, patient-driven, independent, national organization that advocates for people living with arthritis on a range of health care and other policy issues. A key component of CAPA's mandate is to support people living with arthritis through education and awareness. We achieve this by developing educational resources based on identifying unmet patient needs through our Board's 150+ years of lived experience with arthritis.

CAPA has developed a number of evidence-based educational resources on various topics including:

- Pregnancy and Parenting with Arthritis
- Together Enhancing Arthritis Management (TEAM project)
- Medications, and
- Arthritis in the Workplace

Patient-centred educational resources and social support are needed to live with the day-to-day realities of arthritis and may also improve the dialogue with rheumatologists and allied health care professionals.

Methods

Unmet patient needs are identified through the lived experiences of CAPA Board members and members at large. Typically, surveys are developed to further examine the topic. Results are then analyzed and a resource is developed to meet the needs of individuals living with arthritis and promoted through CAPA newsletters, social media and partner networks. Survey results are analyzed and prioritized for content.

CAPA works in partnership with rheumatologists and allied health care professionals to review the resource and ensure it reflects the most current, evidence-based knowledge. The final educational resources are made available in both English and French on CAPA's website and some educational resources are available in Spanish and simplified Chinese.

Results & Discussion

CAPA developed a number of evidence-based educational resources that are listed below. These are developed **for patients and by patients**, along with input from health care providers, to provide the necessary support to live with the disease. Empowering patients with easy to understand, accessible and patient-centred educational information supports informed decision-making and can provide a sense of control to people living with arthritis.



Pregnancy and Parenting with Arthritis

A resource reviewed by rheumatologists for individuals contemplating parenthood and parents living with arthritis. The resource outlines important considerations relating family planning, medication use during pregnancy and breast feeding, life hacks for parents and managing fatigue.



Together Enhancing Arthritis Management (TEAM Project)

With the help of medical experts, 10 comprehensive educational modules were created. It provides an overview of inflammatory arthritis, tips on managing fatigue, communicating with healthcare professionals, etc.



Medications

- **Tips and Tricks when Taking Methotrexate**

A resource developed to assist individuals taking methotrexate, a medication which is often difficult to take for many living with arthritis. The resource suggests adaptations, and foods that may help or worsen symptoms based on the experiences of other patients.

- **Methotrexate and Biologics**

This resource explains the importance of methotrexate in treating some forms of arthritis and highlights why it is sometimes used in combination with biologics.

- **Biosimilars**

A video was created to help explain the differences between biologics and biosimilars and highlights the difference between brand name and generic medications.



Arthritis in the Workplace

This resource outlines how to adapt the work environment for arthritis, self-care to support workplace participation, and workplace rights such as the requirement to accommodate people with disabilities in the workplace.

Conclusion

CAPA developed educational resources to address the unmet needs of people living with arthritis. The use of educational resources increases patient knowledge and management of their condition. It also encourages effective dialogue with rheumatologists and allied healthcare professionals which can lead to better decision-making and reduce stress for people living with arthritis and their families.

Rheumatologists and allied health care professionals are encouraged to refer patients to CAPA's evidence-based resources based on experiences of other patients. This can complement the advice provided in a clinical setting.

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