

A Guide to Talking with Your Doctor



For People *Newly Diagnosed* with Lupus Nephritis

If you've recently been diagnosed with lupus nephritis, you may be feeling overwhelmed, uncertain, or confused. 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 provider can work together to better understand and manage your lupus nephritis.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

What does my diagnosis mean?

- How does my diagnosis compare to other patients whom you manage with lupus nephritis?
- Is there a way to tell how severe my lupus nephritis will become?
- Are my kidneys already damaged? What is the extent of the damage?
- How will my kidney function be measured?

What can I expect in the coming months and years?

- What challenges or complications can I expect? How can I prepare for them? What can I do to minimize them?
- How often should I get checkups?
- What is my prognosis?

What are signs and symptoms of lupus nephritis?

- Is there a way to tell which symptoms I might experience?
- How will my symptoms change over time?
- What can I do to try to minimize symptoms or prevent flare-ups?

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 will lupus nephritis affect my day-to-day routine?

- How will lupus nephritis affect my lifestyle?
 - What long-term changes might I need to make?
 - Should I make any changes to my lifestyle? To my diet?
 - (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?
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What are my treatment options?

- Do you have a long-term treatment plan?
- How do you decide which treatments to prescribe?
- What happens if a certain treatment doesn't work?
- Are there clinical trials I should consider?
- Are there any vitamins, supplements, or over-the-counter medications I should be taking?

For each treatment prescribed:

- Why is this treatment being prescribed?
 - 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?
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What tests can I expect to take in the future?

For each test that is ordered or mentioned:

- Why are you recommending this test?
 - What will the results of this test mean?
 - How often should I get this test?
 - How safe is this test?
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How can I help you manage my lupus nephritis?

- What other specialists should I be seeing?
- How and how often will you interact with 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?

