Guidelines for finding a rheumatologist who is knowledgeable about lupus

Routes for finding a rheumatologist:

1. Ask your primary care physician for a referral to a rheumatologist (this ensures that your healthcare team is on the same page)
2. Locate a rheumatologist through your health insurance website or phone line.
3. Use the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) website to find a Rheumatologist in your area: http://ww2.rheumatology.org/directory/geo.asp
   - Choose three or four rheumatologists in your area
4. Visit your local hospital’s webpage. Search their physician directory by specialty. You may be able to read their profiles which include their “clinical interest”.

Questions to ask the rheumatologist’s office:

1. Do you take my insurance?
2. Do you regularly treat people for lupus?
3. How many lupus patients do you typically see?
4. Which hospitals are you affiliated with?
5. Are you affiliated with a research hospital?
6. What is the wait time for a first-time office visit?
7. How long does the doctor typically spend with each patient?
8. Do you offer patient education?
9. Is there staff on-call who can answer medical questions?

Also for consideration:

1. How did office personnel respond to questions? Were they courteous etc.?
2. Is the doctor board certified?
3. Know the doctor’s education and background. Is he/she practicing in areas in which he/she has received actual training?