



Why ASK?

The reasons to ASK Questions

Ask Why

The more questions you ask the more information you will have about the options available.

Share Why

The more you share, the more your rheumatology clinician will be able to give you information that is important to you.

Know Why

The more information you have, the better equipped you will be to make a decision that is right for you.

The more you ask and share, the more you will know.

ASK

Ask why | Share why | Know why

Three questions to ask your
rheumatology clinician

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health
Administration

VA Portland
Health Care System



CeMPED, Sydney University
& Family Planning NSW
askshareknow.com.au

3 Questions & Summary

Example Questions

Everyone is different

To complete during your appointment

1. What are my options? (including wait & watch)

2. What are the possible benefits and harms of those options?

3. How likely are each of those benefits and harms to happen to me?

SHARE...

What did I tell the rheumatology clinician?

(Lifestyle; preferences; personality & family medical history)

KNOW...

What do I do now? (What have you decided to do)

Asking questions can help you

Which contraception should I choose?

Are you someone who will diligently take a tablet every day at the same time? If not, then a progesterone-only pill most likely won't be best for you. What are your feelings about hormones? If you'd rather not have them, maybe an IUD is your best choice. What is your relationship status? What are your plans for having children down the road? All of these questions play into your decision.

Should I take a pill or shot medication for my arthritis?

Firstly, it is important to know what options you have to treat your arthritis if the medication you are on now is not improving your joint pain or swelling. Knowing benefits (e.g. resolve problem quickly, preventing damage) and harms (e.g. have to take a tablet every day, possible stomach upset, blood test monitoring) are also key in being able to make an informed decision. If you do not make a change in treatment now, will your condition get better?

Should I take prednisone for my RA?

Prednisone can often act quickly to improve joint swelling and pain. Whether or not to take it is a complex question with important pros and cons to consider. Understanding how it will improve arthritis pain, and also knowing the other ways it can impact your health are vital. You'll need to ask some questions to get all the information you need to make a choice that's right for you.

Even two people with the same problem might decide to tackle the problem in different ways.

What one person decides might depend upon:

- How likely I am to take a tablet every day
- What my experience has been (if any) with this approach in the past
- What my personal feelings are about taking this medication
- How the side-effects may affect my life
- Work situation and requirements
- Children and family
- Personal and family medical history

Share the information with your clinician.

"I feel really good because the doctor and I have a lot of dialogue. And the doctor always has answers to my questions. I have "confidence in my doctor." – Eva, age 32



Ask the 3 questions
Share your information
Know what is right for you



Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or if you or your partner are planning a pregnancy.



Start a plan of action with goals to achieve a healthy life.