



# Unspoken questions

Your rheumatologist wants to make sure you are receiving the most appropriate treatment, but they need your help when choosing your treatment because only you know how you feel.

You can also ask questions to find out whether any unwanted effects that you are feeling are normal or whether you can find a simpler treatment regimen. Although some questions may be difficult to ask, the insight they provide into your RA can be a big help to your rheumatologist. You may want to consider the following Unspoken questions to see if they apply to your experiences:

## Questions about “Unwanted effects”:

1. Are there any unwanted effects that people commonly experience with my medication(s)? Is what I am experiencing normal?
2. You may find it helpful to think about how you feel each day and note down feelings you think may be connected to your treatment plan; the TRACK diary can help you to conveniently record this. This can help your rheumatologist understand the severity of your problems and what may be causing them.

## Questions about “Smoking”:

1. Is cigarette smoking associated with an increased risk of developing RA?
2. Can smoking affect the severity of my RA symptoms?
3. Does my smoking affect the efficacy of my RA medications?
4. If I stop smoking, will my RA symptoms improve?
5. Will stopping smoking result in less side-effects from my RA medication?

## Questions about “Missing Medication”:

1. I have been struggling with my treatment and have been tempted to miss / I have missed some of my doses. Is there anything we can do to make my treatment plan easier to stick to?
2. Is it a problem if I take a lower dose of my medication than I was prescribed?
3. My medication has been making me feel tired/nauseous/..., what can I do to minimise this?
4. My medication often makes me feel..., and it is impacting my family life/ability to work. Can anything be done to prevent this?



### Questions about “Forgetting things”:

1. Sometimes I don't remember all my doses. Is it possible for me to have a simpler treatment plan?
2. I sometimes forget to take my medication on the same day each week. Is this a problem?

### Questions about “I just can't do it”:

1. My treatment is a constant struggle and I feel I can't continue, what options do I have?
2. My treatment makes me feel so ill that I feel I can no longer work/enjoy my family life. What can I do?