The Skill Every Woman With RA Needs (But Doesn't Know) Transcript

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Introduction: Women With RA Need Self-Advocacy

Have you ever been told your laps look fine? Maybe you are just stressed or felt like your pain, your fatigue were brushed off because you look okay? You are not too sensitive.

Studies show that women carry most of the global burden of rheumatoid arthritis and that gender, that hormone can change how symptoms show up and how care is delivered.

That's why there is one thing that I highly recommend to end women with rheumatoid arthritis and that is a radical self-advocacy. Not being rude, not being demanding, just clear, confident and informed.

Stick with this video to learn how to do that step-by-step and don't forget to download the free rheuma arthritis guidebook and the rheoma arthritis smoothie for your mornings and please do join our movement and the mission to reach at least 100,000 rumored Arthas warrior by the end of 2026 and you can do that by clicking the like and subscribe button and sharing this video with others who really need this encouragement today.

Before I go further, let me also share something personal. I am not just a rheumatologist, I'm also a dad to a daughter with multiple medical conditions.

And there has been many visits where I walk out thinking, they don't really see the whole picture.

Personal Story and Why Self-Advocacy Matters

They don t understand and see how heavy this is for our kid and for us as a parent. Research shows that patients with chronic and medically complex conditions carry very high levels of stress and emotional burden, and often feel that health professionals don't fully understand their day-to-day realities.

So, when this video talks about self-advocacy, it's not just a theory. It's something I fight for as a doctor and as the parent of a sick kid. If you have ever walked out of the clinic thinking, why didn't I say how bad it really is?

This video is for you. because there is one skill that changes everything for women with rheumatoid arthritis and that is learning to be a strong, compassionate advocate for yourself in every room, medical, work, family and even inside your own head.

Welcome back RA warriors. This channel is here for every person living with rheumatoid arthritis and today's video is specifically for women, the daughters, sisters, mom, and grandmothers who are tired of feeling ignored, rust, or dismissed in their own health journey.

Women with rheumatoid arthritis go through something extra, the struggle, that stress of trying to convey your message to your providers. That's why this video is so close to my heart.

Women, Hormones, and RA Symptom Changes

The same protective instinct I have as a parent, I want you to have yourself as an RA warrior. And here's a big and very interesting idea. Think of your body like a car you drive every day.

Rheumatoid arthritis turn the alarm system way up high in your you are still the driver. Medication, lifestyle changes and your care team are your mechanics and the tools.

But the way you speak up, ask the right questions and set your boundaries is what keeps this car safe on the road. Recent research shows that skills like self-care, communication and emotional resilience are essential for living well

with rheumatoid arthritis along with your medications.

This video is not about pushing through. It is about giving you a roadmap to say, this is my body, my life and I deserve care that fits me. Now, here is the most important thing you need to hear this.

You are not imagining it. RA is more common in women, around three times more than men, and it often hits during your busiest years of your life. For example, working, parenting, caring for others.

And this is a very significant time in your life where you need extra time, you get extra support. But RA tend to hit those women who are struggling with these things.

And comes the hormones, the pregnancy and the menopause that can also directly affect how RA feels.

What Self-Advocacy Means in RA

Many women experience changes in disease activity during pregnancy and often flare after delivery. And the risk of RA rises around menopause as estrogen level drops.

So your symptoms are not just about willpower, they are about the biology and the life stage you are in. Let's think of Leela, she's 42, a full-time working mom, raising two kids and helping her aging parents.

On paper, her labs were stable, but she felt like she was driving a car with check-in lights on, the gas also empty and the alarm system constantly beeping.

She started to think, maybe I'm just weak, But her RA, hormones, stress and lack of support were all working against her. So was her rheumatoid arthritis.

Now as a parent of a sick kid, when I'm sitting in one of those egram rooms, I sometimes do feel that way. I had a similar thoughts. Do they really see how much this takes out of our body and our mind?

Do the really how tired we all are taking care of the sick kids and out body? The same feeling of being unseen is what many of you feel with rheuma arthritis when you see go see your doctors.

Now that comes the importance of the self-advocacy part and you might wonder what does self advocacy really means in rheumatoid arthritis. Self advocacy is not about being rude or demanding.

It means three main things.

Using the Car Metaphor to Explain Care

Number one, understanding your condition. Understanding more about what is rheuma arthritis? How do we manage? how do you tackle this disease? Number two, clearly communicating your needs, you need to understand how you effectively communicate with your doctors.

And number three, we call making shared decisions with care team. You need be actively participating on your care teams on how are you being treated for your arthritis.

A recent study in one of the journal identified key skills areas that patients and clinicians see as essential in taking care of their chronic conditions.

That includes self-care and coping mechanism, emotional resilience, knowledge of disease, personal development, communication and creating good relationships.

These are all pieces of self-advocacy. Another study on the web based self monitoring found that when patients track their symptoms and use digital tools, they feel more engaged and better prepared to discuss treatments.

Now, what does that all mean? That means you have to be actively involved in your care. You need to understand the disease, you need understand how to monitor your disease and how you effectively communicate.

That is what the self advocacy is. Now, let me go back to my earlier car metaphor.

Tracking Symptoms and Sharing Patterns

Imagine your body like this car, your rheumatologist as a mechanic, their clinic as the garage for the car and all the lights you see in your dashboard as those lights that can tell you about rhe Umatology.

Now self-advocacy is saying here is the sound the engine makes. Here is what happens when you press the brake and here's what it looks like in the dashboard.

you are not just dropping this car off to the garage in the clinic and you will say just fix it. You are going to be clear, you're giving clear information to doctors so that your care team really understand how you feeling and how they can fix the car.

Now, let me also explain how being the active driver for this car changes the outcome in rheumatoid arthritis. And you might ask, why does this matter so much for women with rheuma arthritis?

And their answer is our life is complex. Caregiving, work, pregnancy decision, contraception, menopause, mental health. all those intersect with your rheumatoid arthritis.

And the research shows that social support, coping skills and mental health care can improve the pain, the fatigue and the overall quality of life in rheuptoid.

That's why it's very important. Now, let me go back to my patient, Lila, who started tracking her pain, her fatigue, and she noticed a pattern around her menstrual cycle and stress at work.

She brought a sample chart to her visit, the pain scores, energy levels, what she could or could not do that week.

The NESS CAR and 4F Framework

For the first time, Her doctor, rheumatologist could see a clear roadmap of her month. Together, they adjusted the medication timing, added mental health support and wrote a work note to modify her schedule around her flares.

Now, those things, they may not cure rheumatoid arthritis, but it turned a wild, unpredictable car into one she could actually drive safely. RA Warrior, let me pause and ask you and request you an important thing here.

If this video is helpful so far, please tap the like button so more RA Warriors can find this And remember to grab your free RA diet book and the RA smoothie guide to prepare your early morning smoothie.

These are all designed to help you fight against rheumatoid arthritis. Now most of you who are our regular viewers might already know, in our channel we use this simple framework, the NESS CAR and 4F Roadmap.

That is the philosophy that will help you drive your car very safely. And let me quickly recap. What are those? N is your nutrition on what you eat. Exercise are the joint friendly movement that keep you moving.

The next S is sleep, that is you recharging your battery every night. S, is stress management, keeping that alarm system from blaring all day and making every bump in the road feel like a crash.

And C is your checkpoint on your regular checkup with your doctors with including the blood tests, the visits and your self monitoring.

Practical Tools: Symptom Log and Visit Questions

And the A is you're avoiding those risky substances such as alcohol and smoking. An R is a relationship, creating that positive environment that helps you lift up on those difficult days.

and the four F that includes the faith, whatever faith means to you, it could be spirituality, values or bigger purpose. that gives you a deeper reason to keep driving on that hard road of rheumatoid arthritis.

And F is your family who will support you all the time. So is the other F the friends? Those are your RA warrior community that will supports you in those difficult days.

The other f is fulfillment, the activities, goals and dreams that make life meaningful. Now going back to our talk, the self-advocacy, it ties all this together.

It's you saying this is my car, this my values, This is what my faith, family, friends and fulfillment look like to me. And I need my care team to plan around those.

When you speak of using the NASCAR and the Fourier pillars, you are not just asking for fewer symptoms. You are asking a life that actually matches who you and where you want to go.

Now let me leave you with a few practical self-abrogacy tools and here is the three concrete tools every woman with rheumatoid arthritis can start using today.

The number one being Rheumator Arthritis Drivers Log.

Key Takeaways for Women Living With RA

For the next seven days, Track your pain, your stiffness, fatigue and how you feel your mood. Plus, one activity that you struggle with each day like washing your hair, cooking or concentrating at work.

Study so that understanding your patterns help build coping skills and a sense of control. three questions you should ask on every visit with your rheumatologist.

Please write those down. The number one question, my top concern for today is, number two question my number-one goal for the next three months is and the third question is one, question I have about my medication, the lifestyle I could change and my future of rheuma torratifitis.

This simple structure turns a rushed visit into a focused strategy session and support your shared decision-making in managing rheumatoid arthritis. All of you RA warriors, let me bring all this talk together.

RA is like having a car whose alarm system is oversensitive and your parts wear down faster than they should, but you still are the driver. And women with rheumatoid arthritis face these unique challenges of hormonal shifts, pregnancy, menopause, caregiving roles and often higher reported pain and fatigue.

Studies shows that self-care skills, coping strategy that we talked today, mental health support and social connection can make a real difference in your life.

The one thing that I recommend to every RA warriors with Rheumataid Arthritis is not that you stay quiet or tough it out. It is that you have to be kind.

You have be informed and you to have a steady driver of your own health journey. And when I walk into my clinic as Dr. Sumedhi, the goal is to listen deeply to our patients.

When walking it as a parent, The hope is someone listen to deeply our daughter and to us as parents. Those two roles are why this message is so personal to me.

Your pain, your fatigue and your fear about the future deserves time, attention and respect. If this video spoke to you as a woman living with rheumatoid arthritis, remember this, you are not a burden and you're not too sensitive.

You are a driver managing a very complex car. And your voice matters in every room. Please tap that like button. If it helped you, please subscribe so you don't miss another video that we'll be creating on similar topic and also share this video to other women who need to hear this to help fight against rheumatoid arthritis.

And before we go, don t forget to download the free rheuimatoide arthritis guidebook and the RA smoothie recipe and help us support in our goal of reaching at least 100,000 RA warriors by the end of 2026. We are here to build a community where we can fight against rheumatoid arthritis.

I'll see you in the next video. Bye bye.