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AND  
RHEUMATISM  
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DO

# RHEUMATORS

*Practice Newsletter*

SPRING 2023

## ARA Welcomes New Physicians



You may have seen some new faces recently at Arthritis and Rheumatism Associates (ARA). ARA is pleased to announce that we recently added four physicians to our practice. **Dr. Charlie Oshinsky, Dr. Sonia Silinsky Krupnikova, Dr. Viktoria Elkis, and Dr. Eva Rottmann.** The new physicians have been an excellent addition to the ARA family. ARA strives to provide the best possible care of rheumatic diseases to the communities we serve, and the expansion of the service and staff shows how we have furthered our reach.



**CHARLIE OSHINSKY, MD**, is a native of Washington, DC. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania, where he was on the Dean's List each year and graduated magna cum laude. He completed medical school at the NYU School of Medicine, followed by an internal medicine residency at the University of Chicago, and a rheumatology fellowship at the University of Washington, in Seattle.

Dr. Oshinsky's rheumatology research has been recognized in several capacities. He was awarded both the Rheumatology Research Foundation Medical Student Preceptorship Award and the Rheumatology Research Foundation Medical Resident Research Award. He has written first-author publications on vasculitis and osteoarthritis, spoken at the American College of Rheumatology on lupus, and co-authored additional work that has been published or presented at national rheumatology conferences relating to rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, myositis, and vasculitis. Additionally, he has been an invited guest lecturer for multiple years at the University of Washington Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation review course. Dr. Oshinsky helped organize and will lecture at an international conference on vasculitis, the North American Workshop on Vascular Ultrasound in Large Vessel Vasculitis.

Dr. Oshinsky is passionate about providing personalized, high-quality, evidence-based medical care. He is a member of the American College of Rheumatology. He treats all

*continued on next page...*

# ARA Welcomes New Physicians

types of rheumatologic conditions, and areas of interest include inflammatory arthritis such as rheumatoid arthritis, as well as lupus, vasculitis, and musculoskeletal ultrasound.

Dr. Oshinsky enjoys spending time outside hiking and skiing with his wife Sidney, who works in the technology sector.

*He sees patients at our Wheaton and Frederick office locations. The minimum age group accepted is 18.*



**SONIA SILINSKY KRUPNIKOVA, MD**, is a native of the Washington, DC metro area. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Maryland College Park, where she was a Phi Beta Kappa scholar and received her BS degree in Neurobiology and Physiology with a minor in Jewish Studies. She received her medical degree with a focus on medical humanities from George Washington University, where she stayed to complete her residency in primary care internal medicine and her fellowship in rheumatology.

During her fellowship, Dr. Silinsky Krupnikova was involved in several research projects and publications, ranging in subject matter from rheumatology training and education to viral adverse events in patients taking antirheumatic therapies. Her work has been published in *Seminars in Arthritis and Rheumatism*, *The International Journal of Rheumatic Diseases*, and *The International Journal of Rheumatology*. She has been actively involved in the DC Rheumatism Society since her medical school training and served as a fellow member of the board throughout her fellowship. She compiled a history of the society and presented her findings both locally and nationally.

Dr. Silinsky Krupnikova treats all rheumatologic conditions and is especially interested in myositis and clinical reasoning. She is board certified in internal medicine and is a member of several professional societies, including the American College of Rheumatology, the American College of Physicians, and the Rheumatism Society of the District of Columbia.

Dr. Silinsky Krupnikova is a fluent heritage speaker of Russian. When not at work, she enjoys dancing and spending time with her family. She lives in Maryland with her husband, son, and daughter.

*Dr. Silinsky Krupnikova sees patients at our Wheaton location. The minimum age group accepted is 18 years.*



**VIKTORIA ELKIS, MD**, earned her Bachelor of Science degree at Duke University, where she majored in psychology with a concentration in neuroscience and minored in cultural anthropology. Prior to medical school, she was a recipient of the Intramural Research Training

Award and spent three years at the National Institutes of Health. She earned her medical degree at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences and completed her internal medicine

residency at George Washington University Hospital. She completed her fellowship training in rheumatology at Milton S. Hershey Penn State Medical Center. During her fellowship, she completed specialized training in musculoskeletal ultrasound from USSONAR.

Following her fellowship, Dr. Elkis served as an Assistant Professor in the division of rheumatology at Penn State, where she maintained an active clinical practice and enjoyed working with medical trainees. She has given several talks on various topics in rheumatology and has participated in clinical research. She is interested in all areas of rheumatology but has a special interest in myositis, spondylarthritis, and musculoskeletal ultrasound. Dr. Elkis is board certified in internal medicine and rheumatology and is a member of the American College of Rheumatology.

She lives with her husband, an anesthesiologist, and her son. She enjoys hiking, birding, tennis, and playing piano.

*Dr. Elkis sees patients at our Frederick office location. As a Maryland native, she is excited to serving her local community. The minimum age group accepted is 18 years.*



**EVA ROTTMANN, DO**, is a native of the Washington, DC metro area. She graduated from Rutgers University through a women's leadership program demonstrating excellence in STEM and majored in Neuroscience and Psychology. She then received her medical degree at Lake

Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. She completed her training in internal medicine residency and rheumatology fellowship at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA. Prior to her fellowship, she also served as a hospitalist physician for a year where she led resident physician teaching teams.

Dr. Eva Rottmann has been involved in several research projects and has received awards for her oral presentations including Geisinger Scholarship Researcher Award, and the Pennsylvania Rheumatology Society Thieves Market finalist. She presented her research on vasculitis and healthcare protocols at the American College of Rheumatology national meeting. She is trained to perform musculoskeletal ultrasound through USSONAR and is RhMSUS certified. She has published ultrasound findings in crystalline diseases and serves as a USSONAR program mentor for trainees. She was selected into the Harvard Macy Institute for clinician educators.

Dr. Eva Rottmann treats all rheumatologic conditions but has interests in psoriatic arthritis, crystalline diseases, and musculoskeletal ultrasound imaging. She enjoys counseling on wellness, nutrition, and exercise and employs a patient-centered approach. She is a member of the American College of Rheumatology, the International Society for Clinical Densitometry, and the Association of Women in Rheumatology.

Dr. Eva Rottmann is fluent in Chinese (Cantonese). She enjoys oil painting and hiking outdoors with her husband, daughter, and dog.

*Dr. Rottmann sees patients at our Wheaton and Olney locations. The minimum age group accepted is 18 years.*

*To schedule, an appointment with these providers visit [www.arapc.com](http://www.arapc.com).*

# ARA Welcomes New Physician Assistants



**PATRICK H. FARLEY, MSMS, PA-C**, is a board-certified Physician Assistant (PA) with a background in Emergency Medicine now specializing in Rheumatology and returning to the ARA family. Patrick grew up outside New York City and earned a BA in American History and Psychology from Clark University in Worcester, MA. Prior to

attending PA school, Patrick worked as a Clinical Research Coordinator for ARA performing clinical trials for Rheumatoid Arthritis, Osteoarthritis, Ankylosing Spondylitis, and Osteoporosis. Patrick worked on one of the approving trials for Humira (Adalimumab). Patrick graduated from George Washington University Physician Assistant Program in 2005 earning a Master's in Health Science, with honors in the Alpha Eta Honor Society.

Patrick returns to ARA after 16 years at UMMS Baltimore Washington Medical Center Emergency Department where he worked with critically ill patients and mentored and led a team of almost 30 Advanced Practice Providers. Patrick remains on staff at the UMMS BWMC Emergency Department.

During the peak of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Patrick served as a frontline provider both in the Emergency Department and working at the Baltimore Convention Center COVID Field Hospital (BCCFH). Patrick continues to work with COVID-19 patients at the BCCFH part-time, doing telehealth, infusions, testing, and vaccines.

Patrick is a member of the American College of Rheumatology, American Academy of Physician Assistants, Maryland Academy of Physician Assistants, Society of Physician Assistants in Rheumatology, and the Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants. Patrick is certified in Advanced Trauma Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. Patrick is a proud Eagle Scout and during undergrad, led a small bicycle group ride across the United States to raise money for Land Preservation.

Patrick lives with his wife and two daughters in the Annapolis area. He enjoys gardening, barbecuing, hiking, fishing, playing with his dog, crabbing, dad jokes, and supporting his busy daughters in all their multitude of sports.

Patrick works with Dr. Alan Matsumoto and Dr. Jeffrey Potter, seeing patients in the Wheaton office.



**BLAKE LEIBOWITZ, PA-C**, is a board-certified Physician Assistant (PA) specializing in Rheumatology. Born and raised in Baltimore, MD, she completed her Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience & Behavior Biology at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. While pursuing her undergraduate degree, she volunteered at both the Emory Autism Center and the

Department of Psychology with a focus on healthy eating. After graduating from Emory, Blake returned to Baltimore where she worked full-time as a research coordinator at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine with patients diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's.

Blake completed her Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies at DeSales University in Center Valley, PA, where she competed on her school's Challenge Bowl team and volunteered at the DeSales Free Clinic. She received the Medical Director Award and was a member of Pi Alpha, the National Honor Society for Physician Assistants.

After PA school, Blake spent five years working as a PA in Emergency Medicine in Baltimore. She also worked in the COVID-19 field hospital at the Baltimore Convention Center and is a current member of the American College of Rheumatology.

In her free time, she enjoys cooking, running, working out, traveling, and playing with her dogs.

Blake works with Dr. Guada Respicio Duque, seeing patients at the Rockville location.

## ARA Has Extended Hours of Operation

**ARA now has extended operating hours of 7:30 AM-5:30 PM on Mondays through Thursdays and is closed on Fridays.** This change in schedule will allow our patients to receive services including office visits, DXAs, ultrasound appointments, lab appointments, physical therapy, and infusion with earlier and later hours available on our days of operation. **Our medical triage department will also be open with extended hours**

**on Mondays-Thursdays from 7:30 AM -12 PM and 1 PM-5:30 PM.** Our offices will not be available for refill requests or other non-urgent matters on Fridays, but our physicians will continue to have on-call availability for emergencies on Fridays and weekends. Thank you for your patronage. We look forward to continuing to serve your medical needs.

As a reminder, the patient

portal is always available to communicate with ARA. The portal simplifies communication with our office, is secure and eliminates time-consuming phone calls. Did you know you can renew your prescription, request an appointment, review lab results, and request medical records through the portal? You can create an account through our website if you don't already have a portal account.

# Mind Over Pain

ALISON F. DAVIS, PH.D., PATIENT OF ARA

The most common reason people like me visit a doctor is pain. Patients visit rheumatologists for arthritis and other diseases of their joints, muscles, and bones. But mainly, we come for help with the pain.

It is a universal and normal protective biological defense – pain is our body’s warning to seal a cut with a bandage or stay away from the hot stove. Short-lived pain can be severe – like that during childbirth or a car accident – but goes away after the affected area is treated (or a baby is born, for some of us).

Chronic pain, which lasts 3 months or more, is altogether different. People who visit rheumatologists are aware of the lasting discomfort caused by chronic illnesses like arthritis, chronic fatigue syndrome, various autoimmune diseases, and others. Chronic pain is also different because it is controlled, in part, by the brain – scientists discovered this more than 50 years ago.

I arrived as a patient in this practice after a long hunt to identify the source of pain in my hands and feet. I had been misdiagnosed, dismissed, or told to just live with it – making me feel powerless and often making me focus even more on pain. After many tests and detailed probing questions, Dr. Evan Siegel concluded that I have hypermobility syndrome – super bendy joints that are prone to overuse, damage, and early osteoarthritis, which causes ongoing pain in my hands and toes.

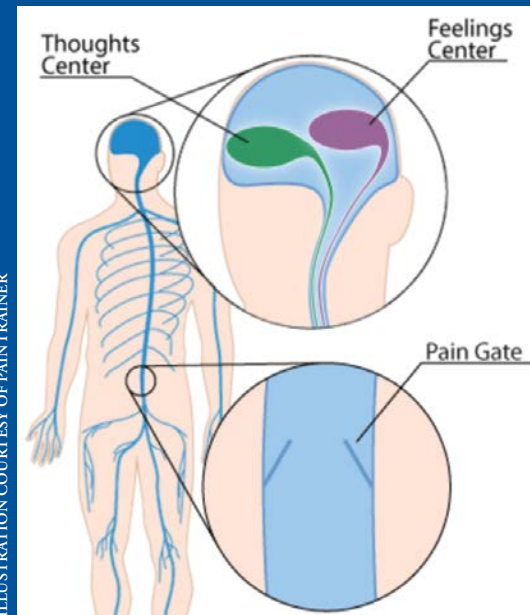
Even though I can’t wrangle my joints back into proper shape – I inherited this “double-jointedness” from my mother, who got it from her father (I have since learned) – I now know I need to protect my joints from further damage. This I am doing with orthotic arches, wrist

braces, and altered behaviors to open jars, pull weeds, winch the sails on our boat, and all the things I do in everyday life. But osteoarthritis isn’t reversible, and my pain is here to stay. Standard medications haven’t worked, giving me painful mouth sores.

I have found another solution: the power of my own mind to open and close my body’s “pain gate” – a thruway for nerve signals from the body to the brain, and back. Psychologically based pain management (or cognitive behavioral therapy, CBT for pain management) is a fancy name for treating pain by opening and closing the pain gate. It works by controlling thoughts and emotions that trigger or relieve pain. This treatment approach has been around since the 1970s when psychologists learned that they could effectively treat patients with many different types of pain using targeted counseling that helps people learn “coping skills” to manage pain.

Proven strategies include tensing and then relaxing your muscles, one by one: a technique known as progressive relaxation, which takes as little as 8 minutes. Others include mindfulness, coping thoughts, and problem-solving; personalized if-then strategies for quenching pain episodes through the power of your own mind – used throughout the day, every day. The basic premise is this: you are in control of your own body’s ability to re-route pain signals.

You’re probably wondering – does this really work, and how could it? I am with you on this. As a scientist-turned-writer, I have a doctorate in pharmacology, the science of how medications work in the body. My husband is a doctor, and my father was a pharmacist. The possibility that my



*Positive and negative brain signals open and close our body's pain gate.*

brain – through controlling my own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors – could act as a drug seemed like a big stretch. But I decided to try.

Despite evidence that psychologically guided pain treatment is effective, these strategies remain underused. To be sure, it can be hard to find a therapist trained in these methods: I could find none in rural Maryland where I live. I was fortunate, however, to find an online version of psychologically based pain management called painTRAINER. This free resource was developed by pain researchers who tested it (a previous version was called painCOACH) with patients that had painful knee osteoarthritis, and a 2017 study showed positive results.

That is certainly true for me. Every day, throughout the day, I use a range of pain coping skills – targeted distraction to transport me from negative to positive. Life is good. I doubt I am unique in becoming obsessed with finding some type of quick fix, a pill, or a procedure, to get beyond the constant irritation of arthritic pain. I now recognize that I have the power of my own mind to help. You can too.

## ARAPC.COM HAS A NEW LOOK!

www.arapc.com has a new look. ARA’s new website is more mobile and user-friendly. Check out the provider star ratings and reviews. Users can easily view providers’ weekly schedules. As a reminder, you can schedule appointments online and always access your patient portal.

# iovera°—The Power of Cold Therapy

If you're suffering from chronic knee pain from osteoarthritis iovera° may be a treatment for you. iovera° utilizes the power of cold to instantly reduce pain. The iovera° treatment is localized and does not inject any drugs into the body. Results can be felt immediately after treatment. When the treatment is applied to a specific nerve, it will interrupt that nerve's ability to send a pain signal, providing an immediate reduction in pain.

The iovera° treatment can be used to treat chronic pain due to osteoarthritis of the knee.

A clinical study showed that most iovera° patients experienced pain relief that lasted up to 90 days. The results of this study show that iovera° patients had:

#### DECREASED KNEE PAIN

Patients continued to experience pain relief at 30, 60, and 90 days after treatment.

#### LESS STIFFNESS

Patients treated experienced less stiffness 30 days after treatment.

#### IMPROVED PHYSICAL FUNCTION

Patients had improved physical function at 90 days.

The iovera° treatment can also be performed prior to knee surgery to help reduce pain after surgery. It provides immediate, long-lasting relief of post-surgical pain. The treatment uses the body's natural response to cold to block the signaling portion of a nerve, temporarily reducing pain during the weeks following surgery. The results of a clinical trial show that iovera° patients had:

#### FEWER OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS

Patients who received iovera° treatment requested



45% fewer opioid prescriptions at 12 weeks after knee replacement surgery.

#### REDUCTION IN KNEE PAIN

Two weeks after surgery, patients treated with iovera° experienced less pain.

#### FASTER DISCHARGE

More patients treated with iovera° were discharged within 2 days of surgery.

*If you're suffering from knee pain, ask your rheumatologist if iovera° may be a treatment for you. See the schedule below for the current ARA physicians who currently perform iovera°.*

For more information, visit [www.iovera.com](http://www.iovera.com).

PROVIDERS	LOCATION	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<b>Dr. Nitasha Kumar</b>	OLNEY				Last Thursday of the month*
<b>Dr. Ashley Beall</b>	SHADY GROVE			Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday*	
<b>Dr. Justin Peng</b>	FAIRFAX		2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday every other month**		
<b>Dr. Justin Peng</b>	DC			2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday every other month**	
<b>Dr. Adey Berhanu</b>	CHEVY CHASE			Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday*	
<b>Dr. Jeff Potter &amp; Patrick Farley, PA-C</b>	WHEATON			Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday*	

(iovera schedule is subject to change) | \*-once a month; \*\*-every other month

# Roasted Cauliflower & Black Bean Tacos

This vegetarian dinner favorite is a great way to spice up your Taco Tuesday! Light, fresh, and delicious weeknight dinner! Have the tacos on their own or serve with a side of cilantro-lime rice and your favorite salsa.

*Prep time: 15 minutes. Cook time: 30 minutes*

## INGREDIENTS:

### *For Cauliflower*

*1 cauliflower, outer leaves and core removed, then cut into medium size florets*

*¼ cup extra virgin olive oil*

*1 teaspoon ground cumin*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*1 teaspoon onion/garlic powder*

*A pinch of ground coriander*

*A pinch of black pepper*

*A pinch of crushed red pepper flakes*

*1 teaspoon dried red chili powder*

*½ teaspoon turmeric powder*

### *For Tacos*

*12 corn tortillas*

*Thinly sliced radishes*

*1 tomato, chopped*

*½ red onion, chopped*

*1 avocado, chopped*

*1 bunch of cilantro, chopped*

*½ lime*

*1 can of vegetarian black beans*

*Light sour cream, optional*

*Shredded cheese of your choice, optional*

## DIRECTIONS:

1) Preheat the oven to 400°F.

2) Place your cauliflower florets in a large mixing bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and add all the spices – cumin, salt, onion/garlic powder, coriander, chili powder, black pepper,



crushed red pepper flakes, and turmeric. Use your hands or a rubber spatula to mix well and then spread the seasoned cauliflower into an even layer on a large, greased baking tray. Roast in the oven, mixing about halfway through, for 25-30 minutes until the tops are a crispy brown.

3) While your cauliflower is roasting, prepare the other ingredients. To make our pico de gallo, chop the tomato, red onion, cilantro, and avocado and add them to a small mixing bowl. Cut the lime in half and squeeze half of the lime over the chopped vegetables. Add a pinch of salt and black pepper. Stir to combine and let this sit for 5 minutes.

4) Slice your radishes into thin slices and place them aside.

5) Open the can of vegetarian black beans and place them into a microwave-safe glass dish. Heat well.

6) Spread your corn tortillas over another large baking tray and let warm for 3-4 minutes in the oven.

7) To assemble the tacos, layer your tortilla on a dish, and add the roasted cauliflower, black beans, radish slices, and pico de gallo. Top it off with sour cream and your favorite shredded cheese.

*Enjoy!*

# Spotlight on Our Medications: Leflunomide

NITASHA KUMAR, MD

## WHAT IS LEFLUNOMIDE?

Leflunomide (Arava) is a drug approved to treat adult moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis. It belongs to a class of medications called disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs).

This class of medicines can decrease joint damage and disability caused by rheumatoid arthritis. Leflunomide is often used to treat rheumatoid arthritis alone or in combination with other DMARDs or biologics.

## HOW DOES LEFLUNOMIDE WORK?

Leflunomide blocks the formation of DNA, which is important for replicating cells, such as those in the immune system. It suppresses the immune system to reduce inflammation that causes pain and swelling in rheumatoid arthritis.

**HOW IS IT TAKEN?** It is given orally, after food, usually once a day. A typical dose is 10 mg to 20 mg daily.

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO WORK?

Improvement is usually seen around 3-4 weeks. The full benefits may not be seen until after 12 weeks of treatment. It needs to be taken continuously to keep symptoms controlled.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE MEDICINE?** The most common side effect of Leflunomide is diarrhea. This symptom can improve with time. Less common side effects include nausea, stomach pain, indigestion, rash, or hair loss.

**CAN I TAKE OTHER MEDICINES OR SUPPLEMENTS?** You should not take Leflunomide if you have a pre-existing liver disease such as hepatitis or cirrhosis. Because alcohol may increase the risk of liver damage with Leflunomide, it should be avoided.

Be sure to tell your rheumatology provider about all the medications you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs and natural remedies, as these may reduce the effectiveness of leflunomide.

**CAN YOU TAKE LEFLUNOMIDE WHILE PREGNANT OR PLANNING FOR PREGNANCY?**

**NO!** Leflunomide can cause serious birth defects. If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, discuss the issue with your rheumatologist. Breastfeeding while taking Leflunomide is not recommended. The use of an effective form of birth control is critical throughout the course of this treatment and for up to two years after it is stopped. This is important, because leflunomide lasts in the body a long time, even after stopping the medication, and could still cause birth defects during this time. Men taking leflunomide who wish to have a child also should talk with their rheumatology provider about how to discontinue the medication. Cholestyramine is a medication you can take to help remove leflunomide from your system.

## WHAT ABOUT VACCINES WHILE ON LEFLUNOMIDE?

It is recommended that people on Leflunomide avoid live vaccines like measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), chickenpox, and yellow fever.

Routine vaccinations are recommended while on leflunomide. These include vaccinations against COVID-19, pneumonia vaccine, and the yearly flu vaccine. Vaccination against shingles with Shingrix is also recommended in selected populations. These vaccines are not live, so it's safe for you to have them.

*For more information visit Rheumatology.org. The link for Leflunomide is <https://www.rheumatology.org/I-Am-A/Patient-Caregiver/Treatments/Leflunomide-Arava>.*

## FUN RHEUM:

I O V E R A S K E F R D K Y C T A O Z F  
N R M V P L A T R O P S F K A G D T Y J  
G B V O B Q A K E B A E O S U Y L S B R  
L N E B B Q O S P V I S H N L Z D C V G  
V R O S T I K E O R T G J I I K G A E K  
M F O P O Y L K I E R R T L F Z N T Q T  
T E X W Q K I E O Z H E I I L D N I M B  
Z Y W K I N C P J Y X N V S O P K W P F  
I L H S P E O N D O F E O O W D U J A T  
Z Y J U E R L E D L D F K R E P G H P X  
O T R S O C D E A M Z O A B R O X C O K  
W K I S K N F M F J R S Y E L R A F F B  
T Z I W E R M Y L L X H V V L Q P F D L  
N S O T O A O N B L U I W O K C A K B N  
E E X J T B W T R K E N G Y B I I I G W  
I E I I T M I E T I Q S O R V K N D M J  
T T O E D H B E R M H K W M W K I J V T  
A N M C T M O H L I A Y V Z I C R I Z S  
P O D R S C M Q I F Y N J L H D T S X T  
C O L L A B O R A T I O N A C T E B K O

Find these words in the puzzle above. Words can go in any direction. Words can share letters as they can share cross over each other.

Rottmann  
Oshinsky  
Elkis  
Farley  
Leibowitz

Silinsky  
Krupnikova  
Ilovera  
Mobile  
Pain

Osteoporosis  
Portal  
Over  
Patient  
Extended

Collaboration  
Leflunomide  
Cauliflower  
Inflammation  
Mind

# RHEUMORS

Arthritis & Rheumatism Associates, P.C.  
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## RHEUMORS

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## PA CORNER

# The Physician-PA Relationship

JENNY LE, PA-C, AND ALISHA ZAVERI, PA-C

As a patient of ARA, you may have seen Jenny and Alisha's familiar faces at the Shady Grove and Fairfax offices. Jenny works with Dr. Ashley Beall in Shady Grove, and Alisha works with Dr. Dan El-Bogdadi in Shady Grove and Fairfax. If you currently see another ARA physician, you may have seen either Jenny or Alisha for an acute visit for an urgent condition. So, you may be wondering, how do the physicians and physician assistants (PAs) work together to care for our patients?

The ARA approach of physician-PA collaboration serves to enhance patient care. Each physician-PA team shares the same patient panel. You will meet both providers at the first new patient visit and the second follow-up visit. This allows you and your healthcare team to address your health concerns and establish a treatment plan together. For subsequent follow-ups after that, you will alternate visits with the physician and the PA. Because the PAs train directly with the physicians they work with, you may notice their style and approach to patient care are remarkably similar!

Both providers will get to know you as they continue to follow you throughout your time at ARA. All your visits are documented and discussed so both providers continue to stay up to date on your case. All your lab results and imaging are reviewed by both providers. When you see a PA, your physician is available for consultation if a change is made to your treatment plan. While this is new and will take some

time to adjust to, we have found this to be a terrific way to have both providers involved in your care.

As you may have noticed at ARA, rheumatology providers like to tackle medical puzzles and find innovative solutions. We believe that having two minds working together will best serve our patients. We are excited to expand this team-based approach to more locations as we welcome more PAs to ARA!

*Please visit [www.arapc.com](http://www.arapc.com) under the tab "Our Providers" to learn more about our providers.*

