

# THE ANA POSITIVE PATIENT (POSSIBLE LUPUS) DO's and DON'Ts

You have a symptomatic patient with a borderline or positive ANA. How do you communicate the possibility that they may or may not have lupus? Follow these easy guidelines.

## **DO TELL THE PATIENT:**

- Your test results indicate that you have a positive ANA. That means that there is a possibility that you may have a disease called lupus.
- A positive ANA is not definitive. The diagnosis of lupus takes into account many factors including further test results and a myriad of clinical symptoms.
- Having a positive ANA does not mean that you absolutely have lupus. It is suggestive that something may be going on and we need to investigate further.
- Some perfectly healthy individuals have positive ANA's and do not have lupus or other autoimmune disease.
- I am referring you to a rheumatologist. A rheumatologist specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of autoimmune and musculoskeletal diseases.
- The rheumatologist will be able to tell you if he/she suspects lupus.
- Please keep in mind that we may have to monitor your bloodwork and symptoms for a period of time before we know if there is a disease process occurring.
- Your rheumatologist will tell you more about lupus, but please do not do Internet research. Lupus is not a death sentence. Most patients live normal, healthy, and full lives. They may need to modify things such as sun exposure, stress levels, etc. to maintain good health.
- It is important that you see a rheumatologist and follow his/her recommendations.
- If you would like more information, please contact the Lupus Foundation of America, Greater Ohio Chapter at 1 (888) NO-LUPUS or [www.LupusGreaterOhio.org](http://www.LupusGreaterOhio.org).
- Please also visit the National Resource Center on Lupus at [www.resources.lupus.org](http://www.resources.lupus.org).

## **DO NOT TELL THE PATIENT:**

- They may have lupus through a voicemail message or email.
- They definitely have lupus.
- Lupus will kill you.
- You need to get on disability.
- You will not be able to have children.