

***How do I sign up to be matched with a
PARASS Peer Support Partner?***

For more information on the Patient-to-Patient program please contact Margo Hanlan at (617) 732-5153 or via email at mhanlan@partners.org.

Thank you for your interest in the PARASS Patient-to-Patient program!



PARASS / Dr. Nancy Shadick
Brigham and Women's Hospital
221 Longwood Ave., BLI 343
Boston, MA 02115
www.BRASSStudy.org

Funded by AMGEN



***Patient-to-Patient
connection
RA Patient
Peer
Support***

Patient Rheumatoid Arthritis
Social Support Initiative
(PARASS)

Brigham & Women's Hospital





What is the PARASS Patient-to-Patient Program?

The PARASS Patient-to-Patient Program is available to any RA patient who would like to talk about living with RA with a fellow patient trained as a Peer Support Partner.

“If there was the ability to speak with other[s], I think it would help people...[to] better understand their condition and what they need to do to improve their wellness.”

Peer support differs from talking with a rheumatologist or nurse in that you connect with a fellow patient who can relate from personal experience and give you their insights to help you handle your individual concerns and situations; concerns such as what to expect when you're initially diagnosed, ways to deal with fatigue, side effects of medications or any other topic of concern—or simply to chat.

Why have a Peer Support Partner?

Every year, more than 200,000 Americans are diagnosed with RA and more than 3,500 individuals see the 35 Brigham and Women's rheumatologists for various types of arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions. With the many diagnoses of RA that are made at BWH each year, there is a strong need for additional sources of

“I think it would be a great thing to be able to email other people—just somebody to talk to who is going through the same things.”

support for new patients. Established patients who are facing new challenges in life or disease management, such as joint replacements, changing work or family obligations, or new medications, can also benefit from the one-on-one interaction and empathy that a Peer Support can provide.

Having a Peer Support Partner can provide you with:

- An opportunity to talk even just one time to ask questions you might have about medications or living with RA.

“I go to my doctors for the professional assessments, but I really do need some nonprofessional, practical assessments on how to live with the disease, as well.”

- A relationship with a fellow patient with whom you can share your thoughts and who can give encouragement, positive insights to help you live well with RA.
- Someone who can connect you to resources and services at the Brigham and refer you to others who may address questions related to your rheumatoid arthritis.
- Help you think about questions you might ask your rheumatologist so that you can make the most out of your clinic visit.

“The most helpful thing ... would be really to talk to someone who has RA. And someone who's had it for a little while, to let you know it's okay.”

What is involved in having a Peer Support?

If you decide to participate in the Peer Support Program, we will ask a few questions to get to know you better in order to place you with a best-fitted match.

