

Web-based tool ups informed choice in rheumatoid arthritis

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(HealthDay) -- A decision support tool effectively communicates the risks and benefits of biologic therapy to patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), increasing their likelihood of making an informed choice about treatment, according to a study published online March 5 in *Arthritis Care & Research*.

Liana Fraenkel, M.D., M.P.H., of the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Conn., and associates developed a Web-based [decision support tool](#) to inform patients with RA about the risks and benefits of biologic therapy with disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs. One hundred four patients were interviewed and the tool was assessed for its efficacy in improving knowledge related to biologics, clarity of values, willingness to take a biologic, and informed choice.

The researchers found that, after viewing the tool, both knowledge and willingness to take a biologic increased significantly. There was also a significant improvement in perceived knowledge and value clarity, after viewing the tool. There was a substantial increase in the proportion of subjects making an informed, value-concordant choice (up from 35 to 64 percent).

"A tool designed to effectively communicate the risks and benefits associated with biologic therapy increased knowledge, patient willingness to escalate care, and the [likelihood](#) of making an informed choice," the authors write. "The results of this study support the need for a clinical trial to examine the impact of the tool in clinical practice."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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