

Giant Cell Arteritis (GCA) Symptom & Flare Checklist

Use this checklist to track symptoms, possible triggers, medications, and when to contact your rheumatologist.

✓ Symptoms (check all that apply)

- New headache (especially temple or side of head)
 - Severe or persistent head pain
 - Scalp tenderness or pain when combing hair
 - Jaw pain or tiredness when chewing
 - Face pain, tongue pain, or throat discomfort
 - Blurred vision
 - Double vision
 - Temporary vision loss
 - Sudden change in eyesight
 - Shoulder pain or stiffness
 - Hip pain or stiffness
 - Neck pain
 - Fatigue or feeling unwell
 - Fever
 - Loss of appetite
 - Unintentional weight loss
 - Arm pain with use / arm tiredness
 - Dry cough
 - Dizziness or balance changes
 - Other: _____
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✓ Possible Triggers / Recent Changes (past 24–72 hours)

- Missed doses of GCA medication

- Recent steroid dose reduction
 - New or worsening headache pattern
 - Recent infection
 - High stress / poor sleep
 - New visual symptoms
 - New medication or dose change
 - Other: _____
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✓ Current Medications

Medications taken for symptoms (today/this flare):

Dose and time taken:

Long-term GCA medication(s) (if any):

Last dose taken (date/time):

When to Call Your Rheumatologist (or seek urgent care)

- Any blurred vision, double vision, temporary vision loss, or sudden vision change
 - New severe headache, especially with scalp tenderness
 - Jaw pain with chewing that is new or worsening
 - Sudden vision loss in one or both eyes
 - Fever with major worsening symptoms
 - Severe shoulder/hip pain and stiffness with constitutional symptoms
 - New neurologic symptoms such as weakness, trouble speaking, or severe dizziness
 - Side effects from medications (rash, shortness of breath, severe GI symptoms)
 - Symptoms returning after steroid taper or dose reduction
 - Questions about medication safety, pregnancy planning, infections, or vaccines
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Contact Information

Rheumatology Care Associates

Phone: [Call \(352\) 717-0603](tel:(352)717-0603)

Contact / Request Appointment: [Contact Us](#)

Address: 2611 S US Hwy 27, Clermont, FL 34711

Website: rheumatologycareassociates.com

Book Appointment: [Schedule Online](#)

Quick Action Plan

During a symptom flare:

1. Take your prescribed medication exactly as directed by your clinician.
2. Do not ignore new headache, jaw pain, or visual symptoms.
3. Write down when the headache started, where it is located, and whether chewing or touching the scalp makes it worse.
4. Note any changes in vision immediately.
5. Rest, stay hydrated, and avoid delaying medical contact if symptoms are escalating.
6. Contact your rheumatologist urgently for new headache, jaw pain, or returning symptoms during steroid taper.
7. Seek emergency care immediately for any vision loss or sudden major visual change.

Prevention tips:

- Take long-term GCA medication consistently as prescribed.
 - Never adjust steroid doses on your own unless specifically instructed.
 - Keep a symptom log that tracks headache, vision changes, jaw pain, and stiffness.
 - Report relapse symptoms early, especially during tapering.
 - Keep regular follow-ups and lab monitoring as advised by your care team.
 - Discuss infection risk, vaccine timing, and steroid side effects with your clinician.
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Need Help?

Emergency / urgent concerns:

[Call now: \(352\) 717-0603](tel:(352)717-0603)

Request appointment:

[Contact Form](#)

Visit website:

rheumatologycareassociates.com

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For educational purposes only. This does not replace professional medical advice. Always consult your healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment.

Learn more about Giant Cell Arteritis: [Visit our GCA Guide](#)

How to Use This Checklist

1. Print this checklist or keep it on your phone.
2. During a flare, check symptoms and recent medication changes.
3. Record medications and timing, especially steroid doses and tapers.
4. Bring it to appointments so your rheumatologist can track relapse patterns and treatment response.
5. Call immediately for any visual symptoms, new jaw pain with chewing, or severe new headache.