



Getting ahead of Friedreich's ataxia comorbidities

A doctor discussion guide for Friedreich's ataxia patients

1 Symptoms check-in

Have you noticed any new or worsening Friedreich's ataxia (FA) symptoms since your last visit? These could be indicative of a developing comorbidity. Place a check next to any symptoms that you would like to discuss.



▶ Cardiovascular

- ☐ Increased shortness of breath
- ☐ Racing, skipping, or pounding heartbeat
- ☐ Chest pain or discomfort
- ☐ Swelling in the ankles, legs, or abdomen

▶ Musculoskeletal

- ☐ Worsened posture
- ☐ Increased back pain or discomfort
- ☐ New or worsening foot pain
- ☐ Changes in foot shape

▶ Endocrine

- ☐ Increased thirst
- ☐ Frequent urination
- ☐ Increased hunger
- ☐ Unexplained weight loss
- ☐ Blurred vision
- ☐ Slow healing or frequent infections
- ☐ Increased fatigue or irritability

▶ Other

- ☐ Changes in hearing or vision
- ☐ Changes in bowel habits or heartburn
- ☐ Other _____

2 Specialist referrals

Visiting a specialist could help you determine whether your symptoms are strictly from FA or a comorbidity. What specialists does your doctor suggest you visit?



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neurologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical therapist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech therapist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pulmonologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Audiologist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endocrinologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist/psychiatrist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gastroenterologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orthopedic physician | |

- ▶ Does your doctor recommend addressing a specific need or question at the appointment(s)?

- ▶ Does your doctor have specific instructions for keeping them in the loop about what's discussed or discovered at the appointment(s)?

3 Monitoring and detection



What tests could help to monitor known comorbidities and diagnose unnoticed ones?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrocardiogram | <input type="checkbox"/> Blood labs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Echocardiogram | <input type="checkbox"/> Audiogram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MRI | <input type="checkbox"/> Eye exam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CT scan | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> X-ray | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blood pressure monitoring | |

4 Furthering the discussion



- ▶ Has your doctor been concerned about one of your comorbidities or the risk of developing a comorbidity?

- ▶ How does (or would) this comorbidity affect the course of your FA and its management?

5 Other notes



Use this space to write down anything else you want to discuss with a doctor about your care plan.

 **Want more information?**

See our guide to
[Friedreich's ataxia empowerment](#)
 or scan this QR code.

Friedreich's Ataxia

