

Spondyloarthritis overview

NICE Pathways bring together all NICE guidance, quality standards and other NICE information on a specific topic.

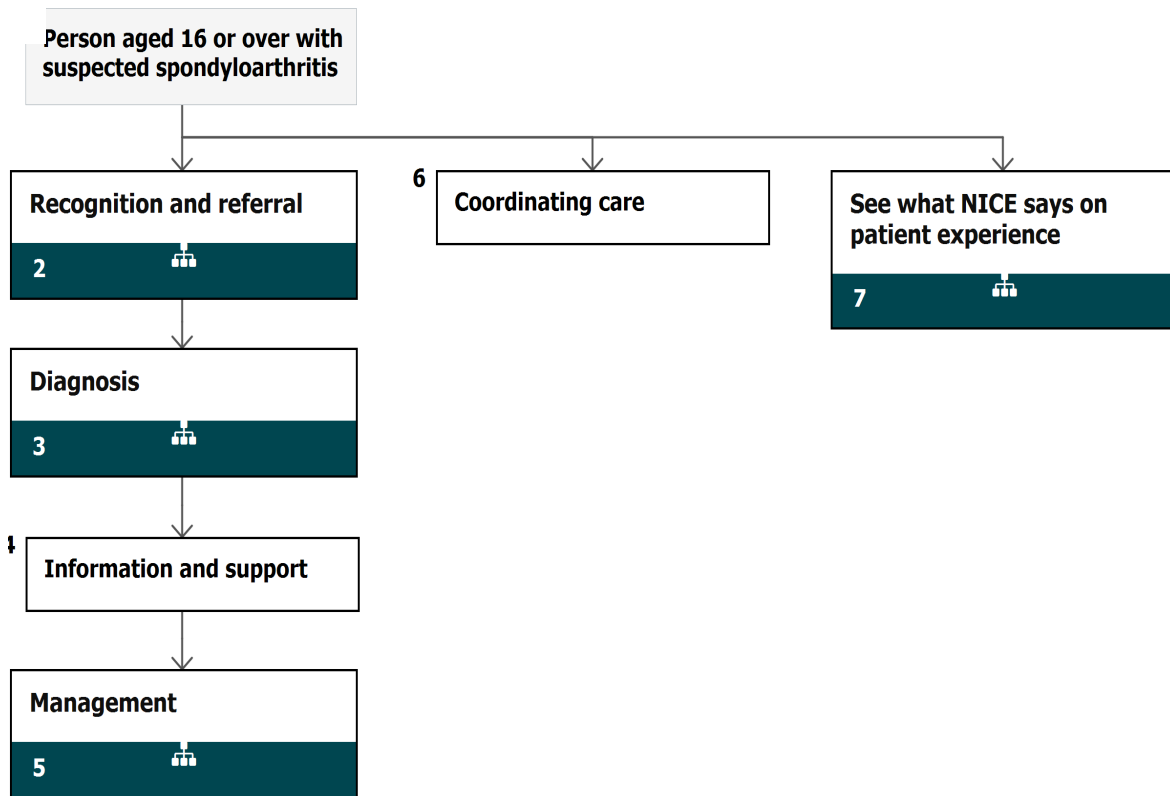
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<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/spondyloarthritis>

Pathway last updated: 02 June 2017

This document contains a single pathway diagram and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.

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1 Person aged 16 or over with suspected spondyloarthritis

No additional information

2 Recognition and referral

[See Spondyloarthritis / Recognition and referral for spondyloarthritis in adults](#)

3 Diagnosis

[See Spondyloarthritis / Diagnosing spondyloarthritis in adults](#)

4 Information and support

Provide people with spondyloarthritis, and their family members or carers (as appropriate), with information that is:

- available on an ongoing basis
- relevant to the stage of the person's condition
- tailored to the person's needs.

For more guidance on providing information to people and discussing their preferences with them, see what NICE says on [patient experience in adult NHS services](#).

Provide explanations and information about spondyloarthritis. Information should be oral and written, and may include:

- what spondyloarthritis is
- diagnosis and prognosis
- treatment options (pharmacological and non-pharmacological), including possible side effects
- likely symptoms and how they can be managed
- flare episodes and extra-articular symptoms
- self-help options
- opportunities for people with spondyloarthritis to be involved in research

- which healthcare professionals will be involved with the person's care and how to get in touch with them
- information about employment rights and ability to work
- local support groups, online forums and national charities, and how to get in touch with them.

Advise people with spondyloarthritis about the possibility of experiencing flare episodes and extra-articular symptoms.

For guidance on managing flares see [managing flares](#).

NICE has written information for the public on [spondyloarthritis](#).

5 Management

[See Spondyloarthritis / Managing spondyloarthritis in adults](#)

6 Coordinating care

Commissioners should ensure that local arrangements are in place to coordinate care for people across primary and secondary (specialist) care. These should cover:

- prescribing NSAIDs and standard DMARDs
- monitoring NSAIDs, standard DMARDs and biological DMARDs
- managing flares
- ensuring prompt access to specialist rheumatology care when needed
- ensuring prompt access to other specialist services to manage comorbidities and extra-articular symptoms.

Ensure that people with spondyloarthritis have access to specialist care in primary or secondary care settings throughout the disease course to ensure optimal long-term spondyloarthritis management (for specific information on arrangements for managing flares see [managing flares](#)).

Ensure that there is effective communication and coordination between all healthcare professionals involved in the person's care, particularly if the person has comorbidities or extra-articular symptoms.

Ensure that there is communication and coordination between rheumatology and other relevant specialities (such as dermatology, gastroenterology and ophthalmology). This is particularly important for people who:

- are already receiving standard DMARDs or biological DMARDs for another condition
- need to start taking standard DMARDs or biological DMARDs for another condition.

For guidance on managing the transition of young people with juvenile idiopathic arthritis to adult services, see what NICE says on [transition from children's to adults' services](#).

7 See what NICE says on patient experience

[See Patient experience in adult NHS services](#)

Glossary

ASAS

Assessment of Spondyloarthritis International Society

BASDAI

Bath ankylosing spondylitis disease activity index

DMARDs

disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs

NSAIDs

non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs

OMERACT

outcome measures in rheumatology

PASI

Psoriasis area and severity index

PsARC

psoriatic arthritis response criteria

TNF

tumour necrosis factor

VAS

visual analogue scale

Sources

Spondyloarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management (2017) NICE guideline NG65

Your responsibility

The guidance in this pathway represents the view of NICE, which was arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. Those working in the NHS, local authorities, the wider public, voluntary and community sectors and the private sector should take it into account when carrying out their professional, managerial or voluntary duties. Implementation of this guidance is the responsibility of local commissioners and/or providers. Commissioners and providers are reminded that it is their responsibility to implement the guidance, in their local context, in light of their duties to avoid unlawful discrimination and to have regard to promoting equality of opportunity. Nothing in this guidance should be interpreted in a way which would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

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