Scleroderma is an autoimmune disease that's so rare, spell-check doesn't even recognize it. And because of a lack of awareness and the funds for research, sometimes doctors don't recognize it either.

The Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter is on a mission to bring awareness to scleroderma and make a difference in the lives of patients and the community. Our chapter is among the nation's most aggressive and dynamic chapters, having recently been recognized regionally and nationally for our awareness efforts.

As part of our mission, we host monthly support groups around the state of Michigan. The groups are for scleroderma patients, friends and families, and cover a wide range of topics. We hope you'll join us at a support group near you.

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**DATE**

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**TIME**

6:30-8:30 p.m.

**LOCATION**

Ascension Borgess Lawrence Education Center  
1521 Gull Road  
Kalamazoo MI 49048  

Room: LEC 125. Located through the foyer and first hall to the left, room is the last one on the left.

The main entrance for the LEC is off Shaffer Street (light traffic at Shaffer and Gill). Park in these lots.

**CONTACT**

Carole Amick  
(630) 848-0544  
csamick@att.net

Please contact Carole if you are interested in attending a meeting.
2020 Support Group Agenda

Intimacy and Relationships: The Issue No One Likes to Address

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: "How have your relationships with family, friends and co-workers changed since being diagnosed?"

III. Education (20 minutes) Intimacy and Relationships: The Issue No One Likes to Address
   • Common concerns about intimacy and chronic illness
   • Tips for when chronic illness gets in the way of intimacy
   • How to communicate grief and loss in relationships?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about ways to improve relationships with better open communication

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

CBD: Benefits, Use and Side Effects

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “What are your feelings about CBD and pain management for scleroderma patients?”

III. Education (20 minutes) CBD: Benefits, Use and Side Effects
   • 7 Common Misconceptions about CBD
   • Benefits of CBD
   • Side effects on CBD
   • Types of CBD
   • How to purchase CBD and where?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about holistic medical treatments

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Finding Resources

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “What one resource have you found to be the most helpful for you or your loved since diagnosis?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Finding Resources
   • What is a credible resource?
   • Top resources
   • Group members share known resources (3 x 5 cards)

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about ways to work through challenging medical situations

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Implementing Team-Based Care: How To Effectively Engage Your Medical Team

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “Who would you identify as the members of your medical team?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Implementing Team-Based Care: How To Effectively Engage Your Medical Team
   • Defining team-based care
   • Why is team-based care beneficial and more patient-centered?
   • How to communicate to your medical team you are looking for a more team-based approach?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about ways to organize your medical records

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Autoimmunity and Inflammation

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “How often does inflammation impact your daily life?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Autoimmunity and Inflammation
   • Different types of inflammation
   • Classic signs of inflammation
   • Stages of inflammation
   • Ways to reduce inflammation

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about helpful tips for managing inflammation

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Understanding Grief and Loss and The Role It Can Play In Your Health

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “What role do you think grief and loss has played in your scleroderma journey?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Understanding Grief and Loss and The Role It Can Play In Your Health
   • Stages of grief model
   • Types of grief reactions
   • Moving past the grief
   • How grief and loss affects us physically and mentally?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about ways to live a more mindful life starting today

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Immunology and The Immune System

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “What is one thing you do to keep your immune system strong?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Immunology and The Immune System
   • Autoimmune diseases and stress: The role stress plays on the immune system
   • Signs of a weak immune system
   • How to boost the immune system?
   • Foods that boost the immune system

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about helpful tips for healthy cooking for the immune system

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
2020 Support Group Agenda

Clinical trials: defining expectations and making an informed decision

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “What is one reason you would decide to participate in a clinical trial?”

III. Education (20 minutes) Clinical trials: defining expectations and making an informed decision
   • What are clinical trials?
   • What are the benefits of clinical trials?
   • What are the risks of clinical trials?
   • How to find clinical trials in your area?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Open discussion about helpful tips for participating in clinical trials

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)
How Autoimmune Diseases Have Changed Our Lives

I. Welcome remarks (5 minutes)

II. Opening ice breaker (20 minutes)
   • Reflective question: “Share one thing that has changed in your life since being diagnosed with scleroderma or another overlapping autoimmune related disease.”
     i. What positive change has come from your diagnosis?
     ii. What life lesson have you learned from your diagnosis?
     iii. What do you miss most about life before your diagnosis?
     iv. What do you wish others knew about your disease?

III. Education (20 minutes) How Autoimmune Diseases Have Changed Our Lives
   • What are clinical trials?
   • What are the benefits of clinical trials?
   • What are the risks of clinical trials?
   • How to find clinical trials in your area?

IV. Helpful tips (10 minutes)
   • Tips for managing change in your life

V. Mindful moment: A take away until we meet again (5 minutes)