

By making the changes below, you can lessen your pain, inflammation and effectively manage your mental health which can only improve your lupus journey.

- Learn as much as you can about Lupus.
- Commit to a healthy diet. Eating a healthy diet, low in saturated fats, lots of fruit and vegetables, less starch and red meat. Avoiding gluten (wheat), sugar and lactose (dairy) is advised.
- Take your medication exactly as prescribed by your doctor.
- Ask your doctor which supplements could be beneficial to you as many people with lupus have deficiencies and require supplements such as vitamin D, folic acid, zinc, calcium and magnesium.
- Protect your skin from sunlight; always use sunblock that is at least 50 spf.
- During a lupus flare rest is essential; your body needs to recover.
- Regular exercise can help muscle weakness and fatigue. A daily walk or chair movement is a start to reduce pain and prevent stiffness of the joints and muscles.
- Pace yourself when planning your activities, delegate and ask your family or friends to help.
- Sleep at least 8 hours a night.
- Reduce stress and trauma.
- Do not smoke and reduce alcohol consumption,
- Keep a medical journal, to monitor you daily symptoms and medical health. This will be very helpful when you have doctor's appointments.
- Take care of your mental health and seek the help of a professional if you are struggling.

#### LIVING WITH LUPUS

Living and coping with a chronic condition can be difficult. At times you might feel angry, depressed and isolated. It is not easy to accept the loss of good health or accept constant pain and changes in your physical body. Talking to someone about how you feel and seeking support is very important.



## ABOUT US

Andrea's Gift Foundation is a non-profit patient advocacy organisation. Our main aim is to educate, raise awareness and offer support to people with Lupus.

### CONTACT INFORMATION



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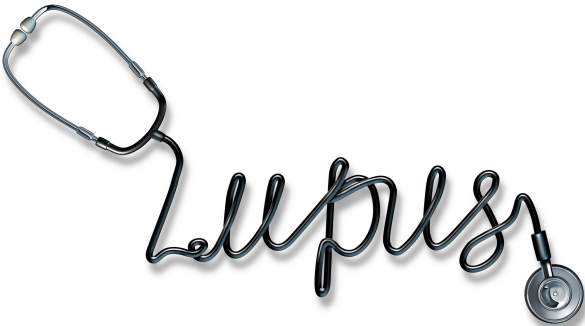
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## The Mystery Disease

## WHAT IS LUPUS?

Lupus is a disease that affects the immune system, which protects the body from germs and infections. When a person has lupus, their immune system cannot tell the difference between germs and their body's healthy tissues and organs, so the body attacks itself. Lupus can affect nearly every part of the body and symptoms can vary from person to person. If you have lupus, you may have some symptoms that are visible and others that are not. Symptoms can come and go, and can change over time.



Pericarditis (Inflammation around heart),  
Endocarditis (inflammation inside the heart)



Fever, Hair loss, Headache, Confusion,  
Memory Loss, Strokes, Seizures, Psychosis



Chest Pain, Shortness of breath, Fatigue, Weakness,  
Lethargy, Pleurisy (inflammation around lungs)

## COMMON LUPUS SYMPTOMS

## WHO GETS LUPUS?

Anyone, at any age, can get lupus. Women of childbearing age are at the greatest risk of being diagnosed with lupus, however, men and children can get lupus as well.

## HOW IS LUPUS DIAGNOSED?

There is not a single test that can be done to diagnose someone with lupus. Doctors must consider different sources of information:

- Your symptoms
- Your medical history
- Results from lab test

Lupus is a difficult disease to diagnose as it imitates other diseases. Ideally, early diagnosis is important. Lupus symptoms can be vague, unpredictable, variable and may come and go. Symptoms do not have to occur at the same time.

### Tests for Lupus

- Full blood count
- ESR- Test for Inflammation
- Kidney and liver tests
- Urinalysis
- ANA- Antibody test for Lupus
- Anti-dsDNA - Antibody test for Lupus
- Chest X-ray
- Echocardiogram of the heart
- Biopsy of the skin or kidney
- Complement C3 and C4

## WHAT CAUSES LUPUS?

Although the definite cause of lupus is unknown, it is believed that the disease is triggered by a combination of genetics and environmental factors including:

- Hormones
- Certain medications and chemicals
- Viral and bacterial infections
- Exposure to UV light
- Dietary factors
- Stress and trauma

## TREATMENT OPTIONS

*Lupus is typically diagnosed and treated by rheumatologists who specialise in the diagnosis of autoimmune diseases. Lupus can affect nearly any organ or organ system of the body.*

### Medical Treatment

Although there is no cure for lupus, effective treatment can minimise symptoms and reduce inflammation. Medicine is often prescribed depending which organ is involved or the severity of the disease

- Antimalarial drugs (such as hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine) are often used to treat the symptoms of lupus and reduce lupus flares.
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) which reduce pain and stiffness.
- Corticosteroids (such as Prednisone) are highly effective anti-inflammatory medications and are used for treating serious complications of lupus.
- Immune suppressing drugs (such as methotrexate, azathioprine, mycophenolate, cyclophosphamide, Mabthera ) suppress the immune system.

### Lifestyle Changes

There are ways you can help effectively manage your lupus and live your best life with the disease.