



Living with Lupus

Winter tips and Information

Lupus and Depression

Depression affects millions of people. There is no single cause that has been identified. It seems to be interactions between genetic, environmental, biochemical and psychosocial factors that play a role. Individuals with lupus or other chronic illnesses may suffer from depression due to a number of reasons.

Some of the medications used to treat lupus cause depression. You can also feel depressed about how lupus has negatively affected your life. You have to first realize that I was depressed, and then try to "snap out of it!" We must remember that depression is NOT a personal weakness or a condition that can be wished away. It is a real illness, but it can be successfully treated.

Treatments include medication, psychotherapy, and other natural remedies. If you know or think you are depressed you can try these tips for a natural approach to promote healthy living. Maintain proper sleep hygiene as advised by your health care professional, Eat a well-balanced diet, Manage anxiety as advised by your health care professional, Participate in a structured and supervised exercise program as advised by your health care professional, Set realistic goals for yourself, Create small and manageable tasks and let others you can trust such as family and friends help you.

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Shining Bright for Lupus!

Lupus Star Foundation

The Lupus Star Foundation is committed to the physical and emotional well being of lupus survivors. We were established to provide support and services to individuals with lupus and their families. We raise public awareness of lupus and its impact, as well as promote overall wellness.

Events and Activities

Happy Lupus, Happy Holidays – Supporting Family

We are here to support families that are affected with lupus throughout the holiday season. For lupus patients, the winter can be very rough and depressing.

Funding Exploration – Locating Potential Funding

Continuing the search for funding is vital. We need to apply for tax exempt status in order to move forward with soliciting donations. This is difficult, because we need the funding to apply for tax exempt 501(c)3.

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Lupus Star Foundation

www.lupusstar.org

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Tips to Manage Depression:

- Avoid Stress.
- Eat a well balanced diet.
- Eat foods that you enjoy.
- Avoid important decisions when depressed.
- Take care of your body.
- Participate in structured and/or supervised exercise.
- Do not take drugs or alcohol.
- Communicate with friends and family.
- Avoid negative thoughts.
- Maintain proper sleep hygiene.
- Manage your anxiety.
- Set realistic goals & create small/manageable tasks.

Tips for Caring for your Skin in the Winter

Those with lupus are often deal with skin issues, from photosensitivity to skin rashes and treatment effects. So those cold days of winter -- the ones that lack humidity, produce icy winds and create dry, chapped skin -- are just another issue that lupus patients must address.

Short of moving to a tropical climate, people with lupus need a simple way to save their skin from the brisk outdoor air and dry indoor heat. Here are 5 quick ways you can turn go from cracked and chapped to smooth and soft.

- **Take a bath.** Regular daily bathing in a warm (not hot) bath or shower adds moisture to the skin -- but only if showers are short (more than 10 minutes and your skin can start to dry out). Make sure to use a mild soap.
- **Moisturize, you say? Yes, moisturize.** Get it on within three minutes of your bath and you'll seal in moisture for most of the day. And forget buying the most expensive one. Instead, shop by ingredient. Look for products that contain lactic acid or urea as they help alleviate even severe dryness.
- Make sure your skin care **products are free of heaving deodorants, alcohol-based toners, and fragrance.** They can irritate skin and make a bad situation worse.
- **Use a humidifier** in the home, to inject moisture in the dry air.
- **Watch your hands.** They often are most affected by a dry environment. To protect them, wear winter gloves outdoors; apply hand cream after washing your hands to retain moisture.
- **Bonus Tip: Wear sunscreen regularly.** This is especially true for lupus patients. You must use sunscreen, even in the winter, to protect from the power of the UV light. In fact, prolonged periods of sunlight exposure should be avoided. A sunscreen or block with protection against UVA and UVB rays should be reapplied every two hours. _www.about.com

Lupus in the News

How does Lupus Affect the Kidneys?

Lupus, or systemic lupus erythematosus, causes chronic inflammation affecting a number of organs, including your kidneys. Kidney inflammation caused by lupus is called lupus nephritis. About half of adults with lupus develop some form of lupus nephritis. Lupus nephritis may lead to kidney failure, but the course of lupus and pattern of its effects on the kidneys is quite variable and hard to predict.

Lupus is an autoimmune disease, with some signs and symptoms in common with other autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, polymyositis and Sjogren's syndrome. Autoimmune diseases develop when your immune system, which normally protects you from foreign microbial invaders, mistakes some of your own tissue for a disease-causing organism or virus. When that happens, your immune system reacts the same way it would to an actual invader -- by producing antibodies to neutralize the threat. In autoimmune diseases, however, the perceived threat is actually part of you. The antibodies your immune system produces in response to this misidentification are known as autoantibodies.

Lupus nephritis is caused by a buildup of autoantibodies bound to their target proteins in the small blood vessels (capillaries) of the kidneys. Initially, lupus nephritis may cause no signs or symptoms. But if inflammation is widespread and persistent, it leads to impaired kidney function, indicated by:

Protein and white blood cells in the urine

High blood pressure

Swelling (edema) of the feet and lower legs

Blood in the urine

If you're diagnosed with lupus, your doctor will likely recommend tests to evaluate your kidney function. These tests may include:

Urine test (urinalysis), which checks the urine for an elevated protein level, plus red blood cells, white blood cells and bits of material (casts) formed when proteins solidify in the kidney tubules

Serum creatinine test, a blood test that measures the ability of your kidneys to excrete waste products

These tests may be repeated periodically. If a problem is detected, your doctor may recommend a kidney biopsy. The results of a biopsy help determine the severity of the kidney disease and appropriate treatment.

Carl F. Anderson, M.D. www.mayoclinic.com



Thank You
For Reading!!

