



Living with Lupus

Summer Tips and Information

Sun and Light Exposure can Cause a Lupus Flare.

Tips for Protecting Sun Sensitive Skin:

- Avoid any prolonged sun exposure, but be especially careful at mid-day, when ultraviolet light is strongest. Remember that clouds do not filter out all of the ultraviolet rays of the sun.
- Most people apply less sunscreen than they need. To achieve the maximum SPF, you need to apply at least one ounce of sunscreen per application. The most frequently missed areas are the back, the sides of the neck, and around the ears.
- Sunlight is not the only source of ultraviolet light. Fluorescent lights and photocopiers emit some ultraviolet light. Tanning beds are not safe for people with lupus.
- Some antibiotics, like tetracycline, can make you more sensitive to sunlight, so ask your doctor or pharmacist about photosensitivity any time you start a new drug.
- Car and house windows screen out UVB rays but not UVA. You can buy films to coat these windows for UVA protection.

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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

Hope & Love 4 Lupus – Awareness Campaign

Our new awareness campaign is great! We are having several materials printed to spread awareness and attract new supporters. We are in desperate need of additional funding for these materials and promotional merchandise.

Holistic & Lakeshore Festival – Awareness Booth

We will be spreading awareness of our organization and lupus at various summer festivals. The Music & Mastery Holistic Festival will take place in Detroit, MI (June 18th). The Lakeshore Family Festival will take place in Ypsilanti, MI (July 1-4). See events calendar on website.

Fighting Lupus on the Lake – Peer Support Activity

Peer support group activity. Boat ride will take place on June 20th, in Ypsilanti, MI.

Share Hope Meeting – Peer Support Group Meeting

Our peer support group meeting will take place in Ypsilanti, MI on July 17th and August 7th. Individuals with lupus and their loved ones are invited, as well as anyone currently dealing with a chronic illness in need of support.

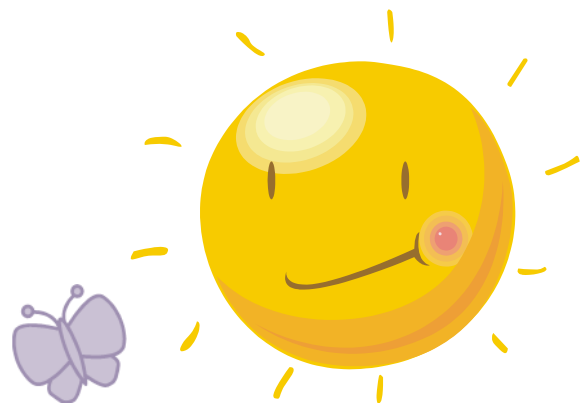
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Lupus Star Foundation

www.lupusstar.org

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- Get Vitamin D safely through a diet that includes vitamin supplements and foods fortified with Vitamin D.
- Use extra caution when near water, snow and sand. They reflect the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chance of sunburn.
- Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, when possible.
- Check the UV Index. The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent sun overexposure.



Reduce Risk of Corticosteroid Side Effects

Despite their side effects, corticosteroid drugs (such as prednisone) remain an important medical treatment. To get the most benefit with the least amount of risk: **Try lower doses or intermittent dosing.** Newer forms of corticosteroids come in varying strengths and lengths of action. **Switch to nonoral forms of corticosteroids.**

Inhaled corticosteroids for asthma, for example, reach lung surfaces directly, reducing the rest of your body's exposure to them and leading to fewer side effects. **Make healthy choices during therapy.** You may need to reduce the number of calories you eat or increase your physical activity to prevent weight gain. Exercise can help reduce muscle weakness and osteoporosis risks. **Take care when discontinuing therapy.** If you take oral corticosteroids for prolonged periods, your adrenal glands produce less of their natural steroid hormones. To give your adrenals time to recover this function, your doctor may reduce your dosage gradually over a period of weeks or even months. If the dosage is reduced too quickly, you may experience fatigue, body aches, lightheadedness and difficulty recovering from minor illnesses.

Tips for Your First Doctor's Visit

Because the symptoms of lupus can mimic so many other health problems, you may need patience while waiting for a diagnosis. Your doctor must rule out a number of other illnesses before diagnosing lupus.

Write down your symptoms ♥ Write down key personal information ♥ Make a list of your key medical information ♥ Take a family member or friend along ♥ Write down questions to ask your doctor ♥ Do your own research before you go

Lupus in the News

Lupus and Sun/Light Sensitivity

Many people with **lupus** have sun sensitive skin, also known as photosensitivity. Typical skin rashes seen in lupus include the butterfly rash, which appears over the nose and cheeks, and discoid rashes that appear as disk-shaped, raised, scaly patches on any sun-exposed area of the body. These rashes are triggered by sun exposure in 50 to 75 percent of people with lupus.

"Photosensitivity is a common symptom of systemic lupus erythematosus. Ultraviolet light consists of three bands: UVA, UVB, and UVC. Patients with lupus are most sensitive to UVA and UVB light," says Amita Bishnoi, MD, a rheumatologist at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

When Sun-Sensitive Skin Is Exposed to Ultraviolet Light

Ultraviolet light is the invisible radiation in sunlight. "Sunlight may trigger a lupus rash and it can also trigger symptoms of joint pain and fatigue," notes Dr. Bishnoi. Lupus is a disease that goes through periods of quiet and periods of increased disease activity called **flares**. Many people with lupus experience flares if they get too much sun exposure.

Although experts don't know the exact **cause of lupus**, it is believed to be partly genetic and partly due to environmental exposures that stimulate an abnormal and exaggerated immune response. In lupus, your immune system becomes reactive to the normal cells and tissues in your body. That is why it is classified as an **autoimmune disease**. In addition to triggering a flare of lupus symptoms, exposure to sunlight may also be one of the main environmental causes of lupus.

How Does Ultraviolet Light Stimulate an Autoimmune Response in Lupus?

One of the functions of a normal immune system is to get rid of old, dying, or defective cells. This normal cell death process is called "apoptosis." Research shows that when your skin is exposed to ultraviolet light it may cause many of your skin cells to die. These dead cells are powerful stimulators of the immune system. In people with lupus, the process of apoptosis is slowed and the prolonged presence of these dead skin cells produces the inflammatory response in your skin that causes a lupus rash. A sunburn can cause massive skin cell death, and in someone with lupus it can trigger the immune system enough to cause inflammation not only in the skin but also in the joints, muscles, and internal organs.

How Can You Protect Yourself From Ultraviolet Light Exposure?

"It is best to avoid prolonged sun exposure. Make sure you use sunscreen with SPF (sun protection factor) greater than or equal to 15, and one that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Wear protective clothing. Use a broad-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt, and long pants if you are going to be outside for long periods of time. Also, watch out for photosensitive medications, which can make you even more sensitive to sunlight," advises Bishnoi.

Written by Chris Iliades, MD



Thank You
For Reading!!

