


Types of Lupus



There are several types of lupus. The symptoms of these types of lupus vary, but can sometimes overlap. The types of lupus are:

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)

SLE is the most common of the types. When people refer to “lupus” they are most likely referring to systemic lupus erythematosus.

Systemic lupus can affect many different organ systems in the body. It can attack any organ such as joints, heart, lungs, kidneys, skin, blood vessels and brain. SLE is marked by chronic inflammation. The cardiovascular and nervous systems can also be affected.

Discoid Lupus

Chronic cutaneous lupus erythematosus (cutaneous lupus), also known as discoid lupus, refers to a form of lupus that is limited to the skin. This form of lupus can exist in people who do not have systemic lupus. Approximately 5% of people with this form of lupus may develop SLE later in life. There are three types of skin lupus: 1. Chronic cutaneous lupus erythematosus (CCLE) (Discoid lupus erythematosus [DLE]), 2. Subacute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (SCLE), and 3. Tumid lupus.

Drug-Induced Lupus Erythematosus

Certain medications can cause lupus-like symptoms in people who do not have SLE. This form of lupus is temporary and will usually subside within months of the time that the medication is stopped. Some medications known to induce lupus-like symptoms in some people are

the blood pressure medications methyldopa and hydralazine, a heart medication called procainamide, and a drug called D-penicillamine. Other causes of the type of lupus are minocycline and anti-TNF.

Neonatal Lupus Erythematosus

This form of lupus may affect babies of women with certain autoantibodies, such as anti-Ro, anti-La, and anti-RNP. About 1 in 1000 women with perfect health possess either anti-Ro or anti-La. A mother who gives birth to a child with neonatal lupus may not have lupus herself. Only about 40% of women who give birth to a baby with neonatal lupus actually have lupus, but lupus or Sjogren's syndrome may occur later in life. Usually neonatal lupus involves only the baby's skin and subsides on its own, even without treatment. One to two percent of infants with neonatal lupus experience congenital heart block. This can be treated by pacemaker. Generally these children go on to lead healthy lives.

Childhood Lupus

The lupus that occurs in children affects the body just as it would in an adult with lupus. Boys are more likely to get childhood lupus than men are to get adult lupus. Usually childhood lupus affects certain organs such as the kidneys, to a greater degree. The incidence of kidney disease is approximately 2 times greater than that of adult lupus. Childhood lupus usually requires more aggressive therapy than adult lupus.

Source: The John Hopkins Lupus Center

