

What is Lupus?



What is lupus

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“What is lupus” is a question we hear a lot. Many people may have heard of lupus before, but many do not actually know what lupus is. If you or a loved one has recently been diagnosed with lupus, please read on to gain a better understanding of what lupus is.

Discovering the Answer to “What is Lupus?”

Lupus (Systemic Lupus Erythematosus) is a chronic autoimmune disease that causes your immune system to mistakenly attack your own healthy cells and tissues. Lupus is a chronic

disease that can wreak havoc on your body in various ways.

Some people may only experience joint pain or sun sensitivity. Even if someone is diagnosed with a “mild” form of lupus, there is always a chance for it to progress into some form of internal organ involvement. Others affected with a more severe lupus may present with disabling central nervous involvement, heart or lung involvement, or kidney failure.

Lupus is a systemic autoimmune disease that occurs when your body’s immune system attacks your own tissues and organs. Inflammation caused by lupus can affect many different body systems – including your joints, skin, kidneys, blood cells, brain, heart and lungs. According to the Lupus Foundation of America, between 1.5 and 2 million US citizens live with lupus (5 million more worldwide). 9 out of 10 lupus patients are women.

Different Types of Lupus



DIFFERENT TYPES OF LUPUS

- SLE (the most common form)
- Discoid Lupus (affects the skin only)
- Drug Induced Lupus (temporary and caused by certain medications)
- Neonatal Lupus (temporary and occurs in newborns)

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different types of lupus

There are four different types of lupus.

- **What is Lupus: Systemic Lupus Erythematosus:** When most people hear the word 'lupus', they are usually thinking about the most common form of lupus which is **Systemic Lupus Erythematosus**. This type of lupus is also sometimes simply referred to as **SLE**. Many people do not realize there are actually different types of lupus as well.
- **Discoid Lupus:** Discoid Lupus is also sometimes referred to as Cutaneous Lupus, as it only affects the skin in a rash form. This discoid rash usually appears in coin shaped lesions on the skin. While the discoid rash can appear anywhere on the body, it is more common on the face, neck, and scalp area due to their increased exposure to sunlight. While Discoid Lupus does not affect internal organs like SLE, it is estimated that 10% of Discoid Lupus patients will develop SLE.
- **Drug Induced Lupus:** Drug Induced Lupus is also referred to as DIL. This type of lupus is symptomatically similar to SLE, but is caused by some medications. The difference between drug induced lupus and SLE is that drug induced lupus will go away within 6 months once the medication is stopped.

- **Neonatal Lupus:** Neonatal lupus is a type of lupus that affects newborns. A baby born to a mother with lupus or other autoimmune disease could possibly develop neonatal lupus. Skin rashes are common, along with anemia, and possibly liver issues in babies with neonatal lupus. This type of lupus usually disappears from babies within a few months of birth.



Did you know

**9 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE
DIAGNOSED WITH LUPUS
ARE WOMEN?**

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If you are recently diagnosed, please do not be afraid to ask your physician or rheumatologist questions. Some people find they have a lot of questions once they get home from their diagnosis and may have been to shocked or blind-sided by such a serious and life-long illness. Write down any questions that you may have and present to your rheumatologist at your next appointment. Join online support groups and work hard on increasing your knowledge of lupus.



Lupus Resources