

Is Lupus Genetic?

Lupus is a complex autoimmune disease that plagues millions of people around the world. While lupus was first discovered and named in the thirteenth century by a physician named Rogerius. He coined the term 'lupus' because it is the latin word for 'wolf' because he believed the malar rash resembled that of a wolf bite. Over the years, many researchers and physicians have made great scientific stride in learning about lupus.

Although lupus was medically discovered generations ago, it is still lagging behind many other diseases in terms of research and treatment. There is still an undecided community of medical professionals and scientific researchers on understanding what exactly causes lupus and if lupus is genetic or hereditary. Today, we want to focus on the long held question, is lupus genetic?

What is Lupus?

Lupus is a systemic autoimmune disease that occurs when your body immune attacks your tissues and organs. Body systems that can be affected by inflammation caused by lupus includes the joints, skin, kidneys, blood cells, heart, brain, and lungs.

Lupus can be hard to detect because its sign and symptoms are often similar to those of other ailments. Facial rash which is the most significant sign of lupus looks like the wings of a butterfly unfolding across both cheeks occurs in many but not all cases of lupus.

Some people tend to develop lupus right at birth and can be triggered by injections, sunlight or some particular drugs.

While there might be no cure for lupus, the symptoms can be controlled by appropriate treatment.

- [Read about lupus symptoms here](#)
- [What is lupus?](#)

Lupus Triggers

While cases of SLE can be found worldwide, it has increased 10x over the last 50 years in Western countries. While this post focuses on lupus genetics, it is important to understand the difference in triggers and genes. While a person may have lupus genetic markers, it is usually a trigger that causes lupus to become activated. There are many environmental factors in which a person's lupus can be triggered.

An overwhelming majority of lupus patients are women (an astonishing 9 out of 10 SLE patients), which has led some to believe in hormonal causes of lupus. Other lupus researchers believe that physical and emotional trauma can also be the cause of lupus becoming active in a person. Infections and viruses have also been named possible triggers for SLE. There is also evidence of sunlight and chemical exposure being named as triggers for lupus. Drug induced lupus occurs in around 10% of people diagnosed with lupus and there have been over 80 various medications responsible for drug induced lupus.

So...is lupus genetic?

Normal variations in various genes can affect the risk of developing SLE, and in most cases multiple genetic factors are thought to be involved.

Lupus is a complex disease that is possibly caused by several interacting features, which includes inherited genes, environmental factors (such as certain medications, severe exposure to ultraviolet rays of the sun, and likely viral exposures at key times), and female hormones.

Lupus is not contagious; it is an autoimmune disease which affects the functioning of your immune system. Therefore, lupus is not a viral or bacterial disease that can be transmitted to other people. Also, the disease is not transmitted through sexual intercourse, and it's possible to have children even if you have lupus. An example is the pop singer Seal, who is diagnosed with discoid lupus but was still able to father three healthy children.



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Is lupus genetic?

[See lupus genetic markers here](#)

Is Lupus Hereditary?

Lupus can be considered a hereditary disease. Recent studies carried out among lupus patients with an identical twin have revealed that there is a 25 percent possibility for the other twin to develop lupus. While for a patient with a fraternal twin, the chance of the other twin to get the disease is 2 to 3 percent.

Current evidence shows that genetics are known to play a role in the development of lupus, but there are several other factors to consider. There is a possibility of developing lupus even if you have no twin or relatives that don't have any autoimmune disease.

No particular gene or group of genes have been proven to cause lupus, however when lupus appears in individual families, and when one of two identical twins has lupus, there is a high probability that the other twin will also be affected by the same disease.

Thus these findings as well as several others, strongly suggest that genes are involved in the development of lupus.

Sporadic which is the most common lupus cases develop means that no known relative has the diseases, however when lupus develops in people with no family history of lupus, it's likely other family members have an autoimmune disease.

Certain ethnic groups such as people of African, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian, Native American, or Pacific Island descent have a higher possibility of developing lupus, which may be attributed to genes they have in common.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that while lupus is caused by certain factors such as environmental exposures (like medications, exposure to ultraviolet rays and also specific viral exposures at key times), and female hormones. Inherited genes have even known to cause the disease especially in a set of twin in which one is affected by the disease, there high chance that the other will develop the disease as well. Another instance is when an individual has some of his family members suffering from autoimmune disease, there is also the possibility such individual develop lupus disease.