



LUPUS ERYTHEMATOSUS

What is Lupus?

Lupus is a chronic inflammatory disease that can affect various parts of the body, especially the skin, joints, blood, and kidneys.

What causes Lupus

No one knows what causes lupus. Scientists think that people are born with the genes to develop lupus and that something brings on or "triggers" the disease and symptoms. However, a combination of genetics (heredity), environment, and hormones is involved.

The most common symptoms of Lupus

- extreme fatigue (tiredness)
- headaches
- painful or swollen joints
- fever
- anemia (low numbers of red blood cells or hemoglobin, or low total blood volume)
- swelling (edema) in feet, legs, hands, and/or around eyes
- pain in chest on deep breathing (pleurisy)
- butterfly-shaped rash across cheeks and nose
- sun- or light-sensitivity (photosensitivity)
- hair loss
- abnormal blood clotting
- fingers turning white and/or blue when cold (Reynaud's phenomenon)
- mouth or nose ulcers

Medications to Treat Lupus Symptoms

There is no cure known for Lupus, but there are various medications that are used to treat the symptoms and keep it under control so to prevent organs damage.

Anti-Inflammatories

Anti-inflammatory medications help to relieve many of the symptoms of lupus by reducing inflammation and pain.

Corticosteroids

Cortisol helps regulate blood pressure and the immune system, and it is the body's most potent anti-inflammatory hormone.

Antimalarials

Antimalarials are most often prescribed for skin rashes, mouth ulcers, and joint pain, but also can be effective in mild forms of lupus where inflammation and blood clotting are a concern.

Immunosuppressives (Immune Modulators)

Immunosuppressive medications are used to control inflammation and the overactive immune system, especially when steroids have been unable to bring lupus symptoms under control, or when a person cannot tolerate high doses of steroids.

Anticoagulant

Because blood clots can be a life-threatening symptom of lupus, these drugs are used to thin your blood to prevent it from clotting too easily.

<http://www.lupus.org/newsite/index.html>

Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year

