

# WHAT IS LUPUS?

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disorder where the immune system of the body becomes too active and attacks the body itself.

## WHAT SYMPTOMS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH LUPUS?

- Joint/muscle aches and pains
- Extreme fatigue and weakness
- Increased risk of miscarriage
- Rashes from sunlight/UV light (including the classical "butterfly" rash on the cheeks and nose)
- Flu-like symptoms and/or night sweats
- Weight gain or loss
- Inflammation of the tissues covering internal organs with associated chest and/or abdominal pain
- Seizures, mental illness or other cerebral problems
- Headaches, migraine
- Kidney problems
- Oral/nasal ulcers
- Hair loss
- Depression
- Haematological disorders including anaemia
- Swollen glands
- Poor blood circulation causing the tips of fingers and toes to turn white then blue on exposure to cold (Raynauds)

## HOW CAN LUPUS BE DIAGNOSED?

For a doctor to reach a diagnosis of lupus, three essential steps are required:

- A detailed overview of the patient's symptoms and past medical history
- A detailed physical examination, which includes testing the urine
- Tests – mostly blood tests but this may involve other tests such as biopsy of the affected organ(s) e.g. kidney or skin

Since lupus can 'mimic' other conditions, it is often necessary to undertake tests to rule out other conditions before a diagnosis of lupus can be made with confidence.



Learn more and get involved at  
[www.lupusuk.org.uk](http://www.lupusuk.org.uk)

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