Living with Lupus

Living with a chronic (long-lasting) disease like lupus can be stressful. Here are some tips to help you manage your symptoms and lower the stress you may feel.

Eat Healthy

There is no special diet for lupus. In general:

- Eat healthy foods and regular meals. This will help you keep your energy up.
- Choose a variety of heart-healthy foods. Add fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to your meals.

Take Your Medicine as Directed by Your Doctor

- Talk to your doctor before taking any herbs, supplements, or vitamins. These may affect the medicines you take to treat lupus.

Stay Active

Most people with lupus should try to take part in some form of exercise. Walking, swimming, and some types of yoga are options. Talk to your doctor before you start to exercise. A regular exercise plan can help:

- Reduce stress
- Keep your heart healthy
- Reduce muscle stiffness and increase muscle strength
- Prevent bone loss (osteoporosis)
- Increase your range of motion

Be Sun-Smart

Many people with lupus are sensitive to ultraviolet (UV) rays. This is called photosensitivity. Sunlight is one source of UV rays. To avoid exposure to UV rays when outdoors:

- Wear sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.
- Be sure to cover areas that may be exposed to the sun (eg, the neck, forehead, and ears).
- Wear a broad-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt, and long pants.
- Stay out of the sun, especially when UV rays are at their peak (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Talk to your doctor about changes you can make in your daily life. Sometimes small changes can help you live better with lupus.