



Allergy, Immunology, & Rheumatology
University of Rochester Medical Center

IQ LUPUS NEWSLETTER

For the latest lupus news and information

Volume 4, Number 2: Spring 2023

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May is Lupus Awareness Month!

We want to take this time to join together as a community, share experiences, and raise awareness about the social, emotional, and economic impact lupus can have on a person's life.

A fellow lupus patient shares her journey with lupus:

"I was diagnosed with lupus at the age of 12. Being a child, I wasn't aware of the many difficulties it would cause for me. When I started college, I was in and out of the hospital every semester. It ended up taking me six years to complete my bachelor's degree. During my time with Lupus, I have been diagnosed with Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome, Stage 3 Chronic Kidney Disease, Raynaud's Syndrome, Discoid Lupus, Anemia, Avascular Necrosis, Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy, and Hypogammaglobulinemia. Though I have had to jump through these different hoops, I have strived to accomplish so much. I self-published my first poetry collection, "Arise, Black Buddafly!" as an ode to myself and anyone living with a chronic illness. Also, after a near death experience in July of 2021, I was deemed permanently disabled. This led me to accomplish my dream of opening a safe space for creatives to showcase their art and collaborate with other artists in Downtown Rochester. I have good days and bad ones, and I am often afraid of the future, but I keep going forward because I don't have a choice. Lupus has and will continue to change my life and I will continue to fight to not only survive but to thrive."

Jordin Pickett, Author of Arise, Black Buddafly! (Available to purchase on Amazon).

Lupus & the Sun

How can sun exposure cause me to have a lupus flare?

The sun emits ultra-violet rays down to earth. The most common UV rays that reach the earth are called UVA and UVB, and they can cause damage on a cellular level to everyone. UVA rays are associated with skin aging and UVB rays are associated with sun burns.

Many studies have looked at how UV rays from the sun affect people with lupus. Lupus patients can sometimes develop a “butterfly” rash on their nose and cheeks from the sun, or rashes may form on areas on their skin. It has been found, though, that sun exposure can also cause a systemic lupus flare, but how?

UV rays cause damage to a person’s skin cells. When the cells become damaged, it causes them to die, a process known as apoptosis. In a person without lupus, the body can often clear these dead skin cells rather quickly. In a person with lupus, it can take longer for the body to clear these cells. In addition, the immune system of a person with lupus will make auto-antibodies and pro-inflammatory cytokines in the body that will trigger an inflammatory response. This inflammatory response can cause a lupus flare, where patients experience rash, fever, joint aches, oral or nasal ulcers..

We want you to enjoy the summer time, but please remember to protect yourself from the sun!

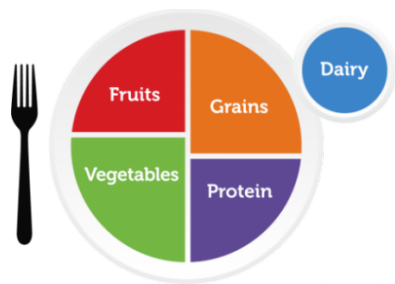
- Wear loose fitting clothing that covers your skin, wide brimmed hats, and sunglasses
- UV rays can pass through thin and light colored fabrics easier than it can dark colored, tightly woven fabrics
- Seek shade when you can
- Avoid tanning beds

Interesting fact: UV rays are still present and can cause damage on cloudy days.

Nutrition Corner

Fruits and vegetables provide the vitamins and minerals our body needs to have a healthy immune system.

We encourage you to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the week. One way to remind yourself to do this is to follow the “My Plate” initiative seen below.



This plate encourages us to fill half of our meal plates with fruits and vegetables. It also provides a helpful image for appropriate portion sizes. Water is recommended at each meal.

Interesting Research on Diet & Lupus:

In a research study done in 2022, the majority of participants with lupus who increased their vegetable consumption and/or decreased the amount of processed foods, sugar, dairy, and carbs found improvement in their joint and muscle pain, fatigue, mood and weight management.

Recipe to try: Basic Vinaigrette Dressing for Salads

- ½ cup Oil of your choice (Olive or Avocado oil recommended)
- 3 tablespoons Vinegar of your choice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 tablespoon Maple Syrup or Honey to add sweetness
- ¼ teaspoon Salt
- Black pepper to taste & any other seasonings you like!

Ways to Save \$

- Plan your meals for the week before going to the store
- Buy in-season fruits and vegetables. Summer is a great time to get melons, berries, corn, cucumbers, squash, and many others!
- Check out the frozen section for fruits & vegetables, especially if they are not in season
- Check out the Rochester Public Food Market for in season fruits and vegetables at a lower cost
- Food pantries are available all over Rochester. Go to foodlinkny.org to find one close to you

How can I keep my fruits and vegetables from going “bad” so quickly?

- Meal planning can help you purchase foods that you will use for the week!
- Use the drawers in your fridge (often called crisper drawers) for storing fruits and vegetables
- To extend shelf life of berries, you can wash/soak berries with 3 cups water to 2 Tbsp white vinegar before storing in the fridge to thoroughly clean and kill existing mold on the berries. Make sure to dry very well before placing in the fridge!
- Wrap a paper towel around broccoli before storing in the fridge drawer to keep it fresher for longer
- Bananas, avocados, kiwi, tomatoes, watermelon, peaches, pineapples and others should be left on the counter
- Potatoes, squash, garlic & onions should be stored in a cool and dark place

Please call/text the IQ Lupus Team to submit or to ask us a question:

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References

- <https://www.mdpi.com/1422-0067/15/9/16043>
- [Plant-based dietary changes may improve symptoms in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus \(sagepub.com\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27654662/)
- [MyPlate | U.S. Department of Agriculture](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/)

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