



Meet Your Lupus Nephritis Treatment Team

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that affects many parts of the body. When lupus harms the kidneys, it is called lupus nephritis. When you have lupus nephritis, it takes a team of doctors and other professionals to manage your care. Get to know the role these professionals may play on your team.

	
Primary Care Provider (PCP)	Rheumatologist
PCPs practice general medicine. PCPs may sometimes be called a “general practitioner”, “family doctor”, or “internist”. Continue to visit your PCP for regular check-ups, free preventive care, and general health questions. PCPs can manage a wide range of common medical problems and refer you to specialists as needed.	Rheumatologists focus on conditions that affect the muscles, joints, and bones. This is usually the first specialist doctor you meet with if you have lupus and the doctor you will visit the most.
Questions to Ask	Questions to Ask
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there anything in my health history I should be concerned about?	<input type="checkbox"/> What is triggering my lupus flares?
<input type="checkbox"/> How often should I have checkups?	<input type="checkbox"/> How do I treat the pain?

What does it mean to have lupus nephritis?

It means your immune system is attacking your kidneys and causing damage. Healthy kidneys filter extra fluid and waste out of your blood to make urine. When damaged kidneys do not work as well as they should, waste and water build up in your body. This can cause problems with your heart, lungs, blood, and bones. The only way to know how well your kidneys are working is to get tested.



Nephrologist

Nephrologists focus on the kidneys. You may get a referral to a nephrologist when diagnosed with lupus nephritis. Kidney damage cannot be reversed but a nephrologist can help monitor your kidney function and create a plan to prevent further kidney damage.

Questions to Ask

- ☐ What were my last blood or urine test results?
- ☐ What medicines can I take to keep my kidneys from getting worse?



Cardiologist

Cardiologists focus on the heart and blood vessels. With lupus nephritis, you have a higher chance of developing heart disease. You may get a referral to a cardiologist if you have a history of heart health issues.

Questions to Ask

- ☐ Is my blood pressure reading healthy?
- ☐ How does my cholesterol level affect my heart?



Renal dietitian

Renal dietitians are experts in diet and nutrition. They can help you create a kidney-friendly meal plan that controls blood pressure and prevents further kidney damage. You may get a referral to a renal dietitian if you need to limit certain foods to control the buildup and waste and fluids in the blood.

Questions to Ask

- ☐ What foods should I be eating?
- ☐ Do I need to lower how much potassium or phosphorus I am having?



Therapist, Counselor, Social Worker

These professionals are trained to provide you with emotional support. They help you handle the daily challenges of living with lupus nephritis. If you want someone to talk to, ask your PCP for a referral.

Questions to Ask

- ☐ Why do I feel so overwhelmed?
- ☐ What can I do when I am feeling down?

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