

Get looped in on lupus nephritis to protect your kidneys



Lupus is an autoimmune disease that can cause your immune system to attack your body. Lupus nephritis happens when your immune system attacks your kidneys and causes damage.

At least 1 out of 2 adults with lupus develops lupus nephritis.

If you have lupus, learn how you can get looped in on lupus nephritis:



Know the steps you can take to keep your kidneys healthy



Get engaged with your care to get the tests, treatment and care you need

Know the symptoms to look out for

If you have lupus, ask your doctor about checking your kidneys, and tell them if you notice any of these symptoms:

- Weight gain
- Feeling tired all the time (fatigue)
- Swelling in your joints, legs, ankles, feet and sometimes your hands and face
- Pain in your muscles and joints
- High blood pressure
- Fever
- Changes in how often you urinate
- Urine that is foamy or bubbly, or has blood in it

Some people have lupus nephritis symptoms at the same time they find out they have lupus (diagnosis), while others do not notice symptoms for years.

Know your current medicines

Lupus affects your whole body, not just your kidneys. That is why there are many different kinds of medicines that you can take to protect your organs or keep your immune system from attacking your body.

Make sure all your health care providers know about all the medicines you take. **Make a list of your medicines and how each one helps, and bring it to your appointments.**



Always follow your doctor's instructions for how and when to take your medicines.

Finding and treating lupus nephritis early can help prevent serious kidney damage.

If you have lupus nephritis, ask your doctor about medicines that keep your kidneys working better, longer.

Stay looped in on your kidney health

Damage to your kidneys from lupus nephritis can cause kidney failure, and you'll need dialysis or a kidney transplant to live. The only way to know if your kidneys are damaged is to get tested. **Ask your doctor:**

- How well are my kidneys working now?
- What tests will we use to measure my kidney function?
- How often will I get those tests?
- What medicines can I take to protect my kidneys?

"Be your own advocate.
Learn as much as you can.
Ask questions."

– Veronica B., living with lupus nephritis

Keep track of how you feel

Keep a lupus journal and write down:

- Any symptoms you have, including when they started and how they affect your daily activities
- Changes in the way you feel, even if it does not seem related to lupus
- Thoughts about how lupus affects your mental health

Bring your journal to appointments. Sharing this information with your treatment team will help them see how well your treatments are working, make any needed changes, help with side effects or get care for your mental health.

Write down when you have flares and what seems to bring them on (triggers). Flares are when your lupus symptoms get worse or new symptoms appear.

Get connected

- **Talk to family and friends.** Spend time with them and share what's going on so they can offer support when you need it most.
- **Ask your doctor or nurse to connect you to a support group or someone who has lupus nephritis.** Learn from others' experiences and get support if you are feeling worried or overwhelmed.

"It takes a whole tribe."

– Della M., living with lupus nephritis

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IN ON LUPUS
NEPHRITIS**

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kidneyfund.org/looped-in-on-lupus

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