How to Create a Lupus Comfort Kit

by BARBARA LEECH

Making a Lupus Comfort Kit

Lupus seems to be several things to me: relentless, unpredictable and the ultimate hunter. I feel I am its prey, never knowing when that wolf will strike me down.

I listen for him. I look for signs. I think the coast is clear and suddenly I wake up in a full-blown attack. Not cool, lupus, not cool.

And for a control freak like myself, it drives me insane when I fall victim to an attack I never saw coming. Basically, I like to be prepared for all of life's challenges and I feel overwhelmed when I learn I am not.

So I have learned to plan ahead for those times I am caught off guard so I don't feel woefully unprepared. I have found there are things I can have on hand for that unexpected flare that suddenly incapacitates me.

Meet my friend in this battle, who I have named Justin Case — AKA things to have on hand in your house just in case of a flare. This lupus comfort kit of items is to provide comfort and ease pain, and hopefully help me feel better prepared to win the sudden battle I find myself in.

Assembling Your Lupus Comfort Kit

If my battle with lupus does nothing else, I hope it serves to help others. I hope the tips and tricks I have found to ease discomfort help you, and help us wage a good battle together.

Here are a few items you should make certain you have on hand for your own Justin Case comfort kit:

Lemons

When life hands you a flare — you need to make lemon water. Essentially, lemons help flush out the body and reduce swelling.

You make lemon water simply by slicing up a lemon and placing a slice or two into an eight-ounce water bottle. Always have at least one lemon in your fridge.

Pain Relievers

Not that over-the-counter stuff even comes close to full lupus pain relief, but it can take the edge off. Make sure you have Advil or whatever you take on hand at all times.

This goes for any regular prescriptions you have, too. Don't let those bottles go empty without refilling and having a supply in your house.

Essential Oils

Some essential oils are known to reduce pain. I keep lavender oil — a famous essential oil for pain relief and relaxation.

It has anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial and sedative properties and it helps to relieve muscle tension and spasms, joint pain and headache. Rosemary, juniper berry, sage and peppermint oil are great to massage into joints or muscles during a painful flare. Rosemary is good for the scalp to slow hair loss.

Epsom Salts

Epsom salts are good to add into the bath for a nice hot bath soak to soothe aching muscles, relieve arthritis, rheumatism and ease lupus discomfort. Put a few drops of essential oil in a hot bath too (you can add up to two to three cups of Epsom salts to enhance the effect).

Healthy Foods

When a flare happens, making large meals is often more than I can muster. I find it helpful to do small/easy meals that are healthy for the family, like grilled cheese and soup, but I also keep healthy foods on hand for snacking.

Broccoli spears and hummus, cashews and baked organic sweet potato chips are great for the body during a flare.

Heating Pads

When pain is deep, it is best to heat. Enough said.

I hope this gets you started with your own list of comfort items to keep handy for your next flare. Having things easily available when the wolf strikes can mean less discomfort for you and a faster recovery.