Finding Lupus Friendly Activities

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Lupus Friendly Activities to Do With Friends

Having lupus can greatly affect what you are able to do. Perhaps you have some favorite activities that are no longer an option for you for a variety of reasons. When lupus is active, fatigue, immunosuppression, nausea, and a multitude of other problems may plague you.

However, that doesn't mean you have to live a lonely life locked in your home away from those you enjoy spending time with. Chances are your friends are well aware of your limitations and they are probably supportive and willing to change things up a bit in order to spend time with you!

Allow them to do exactly that. The rewarding life you once lived is certainly not lost!

Lupus and My Social Life

For the most part, I am homebound. My immunosuppressed state and susceptibility to infection keeps me from frequenting public places — especially those that are typically crowded.

Furthermore, due to lupus photosensitivity issues, many outdoor activities are severely limited as well as those that require a great deal of stamina or strenuous activity; even too much walking can be a challenge due to my breathing issues and oxygen tank limitations.

Being confined to home and the indoors can get boring and eventually lead to cabin fever, so it's important to add variety to my routine so that I don't fall victim to this undesired state. Those who are affected by lupus can still enjoy many activities — and with the inclusion of our friends, the things we do will undoubtedly be more meaningful and memorable!

When I first discovered I was sick, I was still teaching third grade. My day was enjoyed surrounded by children, which I greatly cherished.

Over the years, the teachers I worked with became my greatest friends. We would often get together after work or on the weekends to spend time together.

When my doctor retired me, she did so because I kept getting sick — each case being more severe than the last. I was taking heavy-duty immunosuppression medications, which left me vulnerable to infection.

The small children I worked with were "germ carriers" by nature and before long, it was determined that I could no longer risk my days daring illness to overtake me.

I was worried that the friendships I had developed at work would suffer — out of sight, out of mind. Luckily, that didn't happen! The time I spent with my friends just looked a little different.

The days of music festivals, night-clubs, amusement parks, happy hour, sporting events, and even full-day shopping sprees may be long gone, but with a bit of creativity, planning and determination, fun-filled activities are still possible.

The Round Robin

Round Robin activities allow a group of friends to get together and enjoy each other's company. The possibilities are endless and limited only by your imagination!

Typically, a Round Robin is planned weekly, monthly, or at any frequency that works for you and your friends and can take on a variety of themes. The "host" rotates, so the group gathers at a different home each round.

Some ideas for a get-together include:

1. BUNKO or another game that can be played by several people
2. Pot luck dinners. For more variety, incorporate a theme such as Italian or Mexican
3. Book clubs, scrapbooking, quilting, cake decorating, etc.
4. Pamper parties — pedicures, manicures, etc. Invite a professional to facilitate the event!
5. Hostess events such as Pampered Chef, Mary-K, or essential oils.
6. Coupon clipping and grocery planning — more enjoyable than you might think!
7. Movie night
8. Backyard BBQs
9. Yoga and juice or smoothies — have everyone bring fruits and veggies!
10. Video games — seriously! It is quite a treat watching a group of teachers play Rock Band or Wii Sports!

Plan & Play

When your condition does allow you to venture outdoors or other public facilities, consider some activities or places that are void of too many people. If you are outdoors, remember to take your sun protection kit to shield you from the sun.

1. Some of the greatest restaurants are obscure "hole-in-the-wall" type places and are generally not very crowded. Perhaps each of you could be responsible for a "course," visiting different restaurants for the appetizer, entree, and dessert!
2. Plan and participate in a citywide scavenger hunt or geo-caching event (as long as it isn't too strenuous!)
3. Picnic in the park
4. Museums, zoos, aquariums, etc. Try to select a time that is less popular if necessary to avoid contact with too many people and remember to take hand sanitizer with you! Low-key, slow-paced places would be the best option if you have mobility issues.
5. Spa day — pedicures, manicures, hair, make-up, massages, acupuncture, etc.

Remember that those who suffer from lupus can live perfectly normal lives! You have to be aware of your limitations and take the necessary precautions, but the activities you participate in do not have to diminish.

Sure, there are obviously going to be some things you can no longer manage, but with proper planning and careful consideration, you can virtually do anything you want to!

Heed your doctor's warnings and follow his or her advice, but do not stop living! Lupus is a condition we have, but it does not define who we are.

Life is meant to be enjoyed and spending time with friends, regardless of the activity, absolutely enriches your life.

Chronic conditions can easily cause one to become a victim or a recluse — and that is certainly no way to live. If you find that the people you once enjoyed spending time with do not understand your limitations or are not willing to adjust to meet your needs, find different people to spend time with! True friends *want* to make those necessary

adjustments in order to spend time with you.

There are so many opportunities to indulge your mind, body, spirit, and sense of fun! Get out there and enjoy yourself! By doing so, you just might discover that it does wonders for your overall wellbeing!