Is Lupus Contagious? And Other Questions Answered

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Answering the Question "Is Lupus Contagious?" and More

As with any poorly understood disease, lupus has many myths surrounding it. If you have it, knowing how to explain lupus can be difficult, and you'll find people ask you tons of questions, some of which seem to make very little sense.

Unfortunately, information is spread both through the grapevine (as in word of mouth) and sometimes through false information placed on the internet. In this article, we'll go over some of the most common misconceptions about lupus and give you the correct information.

Is Lupus Contagious?

This is something a lot of people fear. Seeing the symptoms of a friend or family member and their suffering can make contracting the disease yourself a very scary thought.

However, rest assured that lupus is not contagious in any way. It cannot be contracted through kissing, sexual contact, sharing food or any other ways other diseases are often spread.

Lupus is an autoimmune disorder, and although no one really knows what causes it or why certain people develop it, it is thought to be partially genetic. While anyone can develop lupus, it is never because you can in contact with someone who has it.

Is Lupus Caused By a Buildup of Toxins in the Body?

Many alternative health practitioners have started to state that lupus, among other autoimmune disorders, exists because of unhealthy eating or not eating to the standard they are promoting.

You should be wary of people who make claims like this, as many are looking to make a quick buck promoting some kind of diet book or program that is "guaranteed" to cure you of your autoimmune disorder.

As stated above, no one really knows the cause of lupus, but it is certain that it isn't from eating the wrong foods or anything you did wrong. It is definitely not caused by a buildup of toxins in the body.

Is Lupus Caused By Drinking Diet Coke?

This myth was started as an email chain several years ago and just seems like it won't die. Many people have popularly blamed Diet Coke for symptoms similar to those in MS and lupus.

However, there is no scientific evidence to support that excessively drinking Diet Coke causes any kind of autoimmune disorder. It is best to cut down on carbonated drinks if you have issues with your bladder or kidneys

in relation to lupus, as it can cause irritation. However, it isn't the reason you have lupus.

Is Lupus a Blood Disorder?

For some reason when you say you have lupus, people always say, "Oh yeah! I've heard of that. Isn't it a blood disorder?"

Although it is unclear where this one originated from, lupus has nothing to do with the blood. Lupus is a general autoimmune disorder that affects the entire body and is a result of the body attacking itself as it mistakes healthy cells for invader cells.

You Can't Be Young and Have All of These Symptoms!

While lupus is primarily diagnosed in women of childbearing age, anyone of any age can develop it. Some people even develop the disease as children, proving that there is no age limit on this horrible illness.

Do Doctors Diagnose Lupus to Make Money?

It seems this idea is often pervasive. Because of the amount of money medication and treatment costs, particularly in the United States, many people perpetuate the idea to lupus patients that they don't really have their disease.

They want to instill a distrust of the medical system in lupus patients and try to tell them their doctor only diagnosed them to make money because it seemed like an easy thing to do.

However, those of us who have lupus know that it takes some people as long as five to 10 years to get an accurate diagnosis, regardless of the country. While some doctors may be corrupt, it is important to acknowledge that people are not diagnosed with lupus without lots of study into blood work and general symptom observance. It is not a diagnosis that doctors throw out to get money in any way.

Can Lupus Be Cured Through Proper Diet?

Again, with the distrust of the medical community at an all-time high, this is a myth that is perpetuated quite frequently.

If you have lupus, it is almost guaranteed that someone who "knows better" (with no medical degree) will tell you they can cure you through a certain diet. While there is nothing wrong with trying different diets and coming up with one that works for you, there is no evidence that a diet is curative.

You can help relieve some of your symptoms and perhaps feel a little bit better, but in no way are you going to be cured.

Do Only Women of Color Have Lupus?

While women of color are the highest percentage of people with the disease, they are by far not the only ones.

It should be noted that men and white women could also develop lupus. Do not dismiss people who don't fall neatly into the category that most lupus patients do.

You Don't Really Need All That Medication, Do You?

This is another misconception from people who distrust the medical community. They often tell those of us with lupus that we have been overprescribed medication that is making us sicker so doctors can prescribe more medication for the side effects.

In fact, for many of us, the medication we take every day is a lifesaver (literally) and keeps us pain-free. Without lupus medication, many of us would be completely bedbound and in constant pain.

Although many who distrust the medical community don’t believe it, doctors also work closely with us to ensure we are taking the right kind of medication and to limit the amount of side effects we have. In the end, they simply want to help us live a fuller life with this horrible disease.