



Wondering if it is **Lupus?**

Lupus is a serious disease that causes your body to attack itself.

Lupus is a disease that affects the immune system, which protects the body from germs and infections. In a person with lupus, the immune system can't tell the difference between these germs and the body's healthy tissues and organs. So, the body attacks itself.

Lupus can affect nearly every part of the body. If you have lupus, you may have some symptoms that are visible and others that are not. Lupus symptoms vary from person to person, can come and go, and can change over time.

Common lupus symptoms:



Feeling very tired all the time, even when you've had enough sleep



Pain and swelling in your joints or muscles



A butterfly-shaped red rash on your nose and cheeks



Feeling sick or getting a rash after being in the sun



Fingers or toes that turn white or blue in the cold or when you feel stressed



A low-grade fever

Getting an early, accurate lupus diagnosis can reduce its long-term effects.

How do doctors diagnose lupus?

There is not just one test doctors can use to tell if you have lupus. Doctors must consider many different sources of information. Your doctor will look at:

- Your symptoms
- Your medical history
- Results from lab tests such as the ANA or AVISE® test (other tests may include anti-dsDNA or anti-Sm)

What is an ANA test and how does it work?

Doctors may use an ANA test to determine if a person has a certain type of antibody, called antinuclear antibodies (ANA), in their blood. The immune system normally creates antibodies (proteins) to fight germs and infections. Sometimes, the immune system mistakes healthy cells as foreign invaders and makes antinuclear antibodies that attack the healthy cells. Scientists have found that a majority of people with lupus (up to 98%) have antinuclear antibodies in their blood.

The ANA test is not specific for lupus and can sometimes show a positive test result when it's detecting different types of antibodies in the blood. Therefore, if you have a positive ANA test result, it doesn't necessarily mean you have lupus. It can, however, be an important clue for your doctor to look more closely for signs of lupus. After hearing more about your symptoms, your doctor may recommend more tests to help determine if you have lupus. [For more information on the ANA test, visit Lupus.org/Resources.](https://lupus.org/Resources)

What is AVISE® testing?

New, advanced tests like the AVISE Connective Tissue Disease (CTD) test can help diagnose lupus as well as other conditions. AVISE Lupus and AVISE SLE Monitor are specialized blood tests that help doctors identify lupus disease activity in the blood. When combined with a doctor's medical assessment, AVISE tests can provide the information needed to help you get on the path to better health. The Lupus Foundation of America contributed to the research that led to the development of the AVISE Lupus test.

[For more information on AVISE testing, visit AviseTest.com.](https://avisetest.com)

Talking with your doctor about all of your symptoms and getting the right lab tests are important steps to arriving at an accurate diagnosis.

The Lupus Foundation of America is your partner, helping you find resources and getting the support you need. As the national organization devoted to solving the mysteries of lupus, the Foundation advances medical research and provides caring support to those who are living with the brutal impact of lupus.

RESOURCES INCLUDE

National Resource Center on Lupus - A collection of up-to-date resources and information on lupus. You will find a questionnaire to see if your symptoms could be related to lupus, a guide for talking with your doctor, additional information on how lupus is diagnosed, a lupus symptom tracker and more. Lupus.org/Resources

National Health Educator Network - Our health education experts are available to answer questions and provide helpful information, resources and support to those with questions about lupus. Call 1-800-558-0121 or visit Lupus.org/HealthEducator to get help in English and Spanish.

LupusConnect™ Online Community - An online community where members engage with others like them to share experiences and find emotional support. Lupus.org/LupusConnect

E-newsletter - Sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter that includes the latest research, news and articles about living with lupus.

Social Media - For daily updates on news and information on lupus, follow us here:

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