

## FACTS ABOUT LUPUS:

Lupus is one of the cruelest, most mysterious diseases on earth—an unpredictable and misunderstood autoimmune disease that ravages different parts of the body. It is difficult to diagnose, hard to live with, and a challenge to treat.

### Lupus Facts

- Lupus is a complex disease that is hard to define. It strikes without warning, affects each person differently, and has no known causes or cure.
- Lupus symptoms can be severe, and highly unpredictable and can damage any organ or tissue, from the skin or joints to the heart or kidneys.
- Living with lupus can be baffling and isolating, as symptoms mimic other illnesses and often do not cause people to look sick.
- Common symptoms include extreme fatigue, headaches, painful or swollen joints, fever, anemia, butterfly-shaped rash on the face, photosensitivity, hair loss, abnormal blood clotting, mouth or nose ulcers, pain in chest on deep breathing and fingers turning white and/or blue when cold.
- While lupus can be disabling and potentially fatal, in many cases the most serious health effects can be managed through aggressive medical treatment and lifestyle changes.
- On average, it takes nearly six years for people with lupus to be diagnosed, from the time they first notice their lupus symptoms.
- People with lupus take on average nearly eight prescription medications to manage all of their medical conditions.

### Lupus in America

- An estimated 1.5 million Americans have lupus.
- Lupus can strike anyone at any time, but 90 percent of the people living with lupus are women.
- Lupus usually develops between ages 15 and 44, and lasts a lifetime.
- Lupus is two to three times more prevalent among women of color -- African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders -- than among Caucasian women.
- Despite the widespread prevalence of lupus, research on the disease has remained underfunded, relative to its scope and devastation.
- Only two drugs have ever been developed specifically to treat lupus and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- Awareness about lupus among Americans of all ages is extremely low, with 61 percent of Americans reporting they have never heard of lupus or know little or nothing about the disease beyond the name.
- The mean annual direct health care and lost productivity costs for people with lupus is \$20,000.

## ABOUT THE LUPUS FOUNDATION OF AMERICA:

The Lupus Foundation of America is the only national force devoted to solving the mystery of lupus, one of the world's cruelest, most unpredictable and devastating diseases, while giving caring support to those who suffer from its brutal impact. Through a comprehensive program of research, education, support and advocacy, we lead the fight to improve the quality of life for all people affected by lupus.

Visit [lupus.org](http://lupus.org) to learn more and how to join the fight to end lupus.