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Abstract

Lupus is a long-term autoimmune disease in which the body’s immune system becomes hyperactive and attacks normal, healthy tissue. Symptoms include inflammation, swelling, and damage to the joints, skin, kidneys, blood, heart, and lungs. Systemic lupus erythematosus most often affects young women and involves a disorder in the body's immune system that can affect many parts of the body including joints. Scientists are finding different genetic patterns and autoantibodies for lupus and its complications. High levels of interferon have been found in people with lupus. Scientists are looking at interferon to see whether this substance which the body produces naturally contributes to lupus.

SLE is the most familiar type of lupus. It is a systemic condition. This means it has an impact throughout the body. The symptoms can range from mild to severe.

It is more severe than other types of lupus, such as discoid lupus, because it can affect any of the body's organs or organ systems. It can cause inflammation in the skin, joints, lungs, kidneys, blood, heart, or a combination of these. This condition typically goes through cycles. At times of remission, the person will have no symptoms. During a flare-up, the disease is active, and symptoms appear.