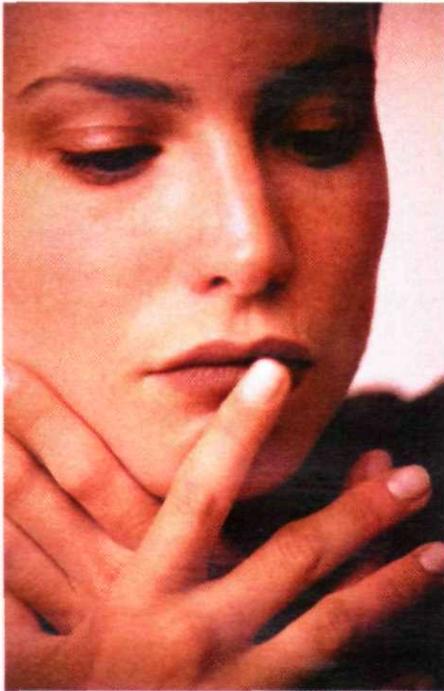


LUPUS MANAGEMENT



It was not too long ago that diagnosis of lupus was considered life-threatening. After months of joint pain, fatigue and rash, the shock of this verdict was devastating. The good news is that lupus is now manageable. Lifestyle changes and intervention therapies have made lupus less of a struggle and, in many cases, lives have been extended.

Lupus ensues when the immune system loses its ability to differentiate between substances invading the body and its own cells and tissues. The upshot is that the body directs antibodies to its own self, causing tissue damage, inflammation and pain. Lupus is an inflammatory

autoimmune condition that affects many parts of the body, including the skin, joints, kidneys, blood cells, heart, lungs and brain. The cause of lupus remains a mystery until today.

The common form of lupus among adults is systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). Lupus may be difficult to diagnose, especially if no overt signs or symptoms are presented. Signs and symptoms of lupus are:

- A butterfly-shaped rash across the bridge of the nose and cheeks, or a scaly, disc-shaped rash that appears on the face, neck or chest.
- Sensitivity to sunlight
- Oral ulcers on the tongue and gums, which are often painless.
- Arthritis, routinely in the joints of fingers, hands, wrists and knees.
- An inflammation of the lining of organs (serositis), such as the heart and lungs, which may cause painful breathing, shortness of breath or chest pain.
- Kidney problems that may cause swelling (edema) in the legs or high blood pressure.
- Brain or spinal cord problems that may lead to numbness, tingling or weakness in one or more extremities, headaches, seizures, dizziness, vision problems, behavior changes, or even stroke.
- Other signs and symptoms may include fatigue, fever, swelling, anemia and hair loss.

Medications can reduce complications of lupus, which include non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), anti-malarials (for their anti-inflammatory effects), corticosteroids to

Q&A

Q: "Does the cholesterol drug called 'Zetia' work better than a statin?"

- C. Jergins, CO

A: Zetis (Ezetimibe) is neither better nor worse than a statin. It simply works differently. Like a statin, it reduces total cholesterol and LDL ("bad" cholesterol). But it also increases HDL ("good cholesterol). Elevated cholesterol, LDL, and low HDL cholesterol promote atherosclerosis --fatty build-up in the arteries that contribute to heart attacks and stroke.

Cholesterol enters the body with food, but is also produced by the body itself. Statins inhibit the enzyme the liver requires to produce cholesterol. Ezetimibe, on the other hand, interferes with absorption of cholesterol from dietary sources from the small intestine. Taking Zetia along with a statin puts two different approaches to reduce cholesterol, and so it is more effective that taking either drug alone. However, the long-term side effects of Zetia are not known yet, but appear to be minimal.

High LDL cholesterol levels are best managed with lifestyle changes and sometimes with a statin drug. Simultaneously, however, inflammatory response should be controlled as well, because one-half of all heart attacks stem from inflammation. One way to manage inflammatory response is the intake of systemic enzymes, which shift the balance of pro-inflammatory substances in the body to anti-inflammatory substances. It may also be a viable alternative for those at risk for heart problems or are sensitive to side effects of statins.

- ROSE

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counter inflammation, and immunosuppressives to reduce the autoimmune response. Immunosuppressives are prescribed if multiple organs are affected, but most specially the kidneys.

Nearly all of the drugs listed above have side effects. For example, immunosuppressives may result in anemia and low white blood cells counts, increasing the risk of infection. Used over long term, immunosuppressives can also increase the risk of certain types of cancers.

Coping with lupus can be stressful, and relaxation techniques, such as meditation and yoga, and finding support groups may be helpful. There may be natural ways to manage inflammation as well, however. Thus, systemic enzymes can be used to manage inflammatory response within the body's physiological context. Systemic enzymes modulate the immune response by restoring the balance in favor of anti-inflammatory substances. To learn more about how systemic enzymes mobilize the body's own healing response, visit www.wobenzym.com or www.enzyme-therapy.at. ■

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¹ Heart Disease claims the lives of 500,000 women each year - 8 times more women under 45 than any other single disease. (Source: Centers for Disease Control)

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