

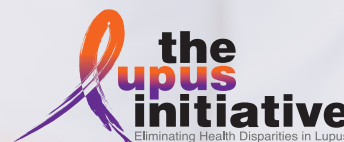
Students with Lupus Guidance for School Nurses

Signs, Symptoms, & Possible Recommended Treatments



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AMERICAN COLLEGE
of RHEUMATOLOGY
Empowering Rheumatology Professionals



Students with Lupus

Guidance for School Nurses

Below are instructions for treatment of signs and symptoms of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.

We strongly recommend that you request your student with lupus and his/her parents provide you with a Customized Care Plan from his/her Pediatric Rheumatologist at the beginning of each school year.

Mild to Moderate Symptoms of Lupus

Contact the student's parent if experiencing mild to moderate symptoms.

If the student is presenting frequently to your office, please inform the student's parents and encourage the student's parents to contact the physician's office directly.



Joint Pain/ Joint Swelling

1. Allow the student to rest for 30 minutes.
2. May apply heat or ice per student preference.
3. Administer pain medication per healthcare provider orders (see Medical Release Form)
4. Resume physical activities as tolerated.
5. In general, please allow extra time between classes and elevator use if available. No demerits for hand-writing. Where possible, encourage the use of technology, such as keyboard, dictation or other OT support. Allow student to move around in class to reduce stiffness.



Rash

1. Student should be applying daily sunscreen (at least SPF 30) with reapplication prior to outside activities.
2. Allow wide-brimmed hat/baseball cap when outside.
3. Seat away from windows in classroom.



High Blood Pressure

1. Check blood pressure if student is experiencing headaches, light-headedness, or palpitations.
2. If BP is higher than criteria provided by the healthcare provider, allow student to rest for 30 minutes, then recheck.
3. If student is taking BP medications, ask when the last dose was taken.
4. If BP is still elevated after 30 minutes, contact family and/or healthcare provider for next steps.

https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/guidelines/child_tbl.pdf



Headaches

1. Allow the student to rest about 30 minutes.
2. Have student drink a full glass of water.
3. If headache persists, may give pain medication as ordered.
4. If headaches persist despite rest, hydration and pain medication, encourage the family to contact their student's rheumatologist.

Students with Lupus

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Mild to Moderate Symptoms of Lupus continued...



Fever

Contact parent to pick up student for fever > 100.5 F and instruct parent to have student evaluated by a medical professional.



Fatigue

1. Allow the student to rest x 30 minutes.
2. When returning to activities, consider modifications (e.g., walking instead of running).



Color Change to Fingers/Toes (Raynaud's)

1. If there is color change, it is important to warm fingers/toes promptly.
2. Utilize hand/foot warming techniques, such as placing under warm water, using gloves or placing hands in pockets.



Mild Mental Changes

Note: Decreased ability to concentrate or fatigue may be noted due to active disease or side effects of certain medications.



Additional Symptoms

Additional symptoms identified by the healthcare provider, student, or family

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Severe Symptoms of Lupus

Contact the parent AND rheumatologist for all severe symptoms



Chest Pain/ Difficulty Breathing

1. Allow the student to rest.
2. Check vital signs including blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature and pulse oximetry.
3. If chest pain and/or difficulty breathing persist, follow healthcare provider orders (e.g., contact 911/emergency medical services or family for medical evaluation)



Seizures

1. Call 911.
2. Stay calm and track starting time of seizure.
3. Keep student safe. Protect head. Do not put anything in student's mouth. Keep airway open and watch breathing. Do not restrain the student.
4. May turn the student on his/her side if no suspected neck or spinal injury.
5. Stay with the student until fully conscious and medical professionals arrive.

Note: Seizures are not common in students with lupus. If the student experiences a seizure, it is a medical emergency. Contact 911/emergency medical services and the family.

Epilepsy Foundation (2020). Seizure First Aid Resources. <https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/toolbox/seizure-first-aid-resources>

Epilepsy Foundation (2013). Seizure Action Plans. <https://www.epilepsy.com/learn/managing-your-epilepsy/seizure-action-plans>



Confusion/ Memory Loss/ Disorientation

1. Contact the family and inform them of the student's change in mental status.
2. Keep the student safe.
3. If this is a new onset symptom, immediate medical evaluation is needed. Contact 911/emergency medical services.



Severe Headaches with Neck Stiffness and/or Fever

1. Check vital signs including blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature and pulse oximetry.
2. Administer acetaminophen if ordered.
3. Contact family.
4. If this is a new onset symptom, immediate medical evaluation is needed. Contact 911/emergency medical services.

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Severe Symptoms continued...



Concern for Stroke / Change in Mental Status

1. In the event of a possible stroke, use F.A.S.T. to help remember warning signs.
 - » Face. Does the face droop on one side when the person tries to smile?
 - » Arms. Is one arm lower when the person tries to raise both arms?
 - » Speech. Can the person repeat a simple sentence? Is speech slurred or hard to understand?
 - » Time. During a stroke every minute counts.

Other signs and symptoms of a stroke, which come on suddenly, include:

- » Weakness or numbness on one side of the body, including either leg,
- » Dimness, blurring or loss of vision, particularly in one eye,
- » Severe headache — a bolt out of the blue — with no apparent cause, or
- » Unexplained dizziness, unsteadiness or a sudden fall, especially if accompanied by any of the other signs or symptoms.

American Stroke Association. <https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/stroke-symptoms>

2. Call 911 immediately if you observe any of these signs. Have the student transported to nearest ER.
3. Keep the student safe and discourage mobility to prevent a fall.



Additional Symptoms

Additional symptoms identified by the healthcare provider, student, or family

Lupus and treatment for lupus may also lead to changes in appearance, such as: hair loss, scarring, weight loss or weight gain, round (moon) face, visible rashes, and stretch marks. Changes in appearance may lead to depression, bullying, isolation, and other psychosocial issues. If the student is experiencing any of these, please discuss directly with the parent. You may also contact the physician's office.

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