



May this year bring happiness, new achievements and new inspirations into your life. January is a time to embrace change, take care of yourself, and set new goals. While being positive is important, it is also crucial to acknowledge that you may need rest, you do not need to always be happy or energetic.

This month can be a hard time of year for those living with lupus. A combination of weather, school or work can affect one's mental state, so be kind to yourself! The word that Lupus Canada will be focusing on this month is 'prioritizing'. With the new year, so many people try to take on a lot of tasks and try new things. Remember to be open and honest with yourself. In order for you to be the best version of yourself you need to go back to the basics. Are you sleeping enough, eating well, and engaging in light activity? Prioritizing yourself will allow you to reach your potential, feel grounded, and connected.

Should you wish to start off your year by supporting individuals in Canada living with lupus, please consider donating to Lupus Canada. Whether it is a one-time-gift, in-honour or in-memory, feel free to visit <https://www.lupuscanada.org/ways-to-donate/> to find more information!

Happy New Year from the Board and Staff at Lupus Canada!

DONATE NOW
your gift makes a difference

This past year Lupus Canada was able to achieve so much with YOUR help! We appreciate all of your support in 2019. Together, we are working towards life without lupus.

- ***With your support***, Lupus Canada supported various research programs in 2019
- ***With your support***, Lupus Canada supported 8 students living with lupus through our Scholarship program
- ***With your support***, Lupus Canada helped raise the much needed awareness of this under-funded and underrecognized disease

- ***With your support***, Lupus Canada advocated on behalf of the lupus patient to Government officials across Canada to recognize World Lupus Day in each Province
- ***With your support***, Lupus Canada's advocacy campaign sought changes to the Canadian Employment Insurance Sickness Benefit and to the Canadian Pension Plan – Disability Component

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff at Lupus Canada,

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to a great 2020!

Together we are making a difference!

THANK YOU!

PRIORITIZING YOURSELF:

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/compassion-matters/201708/the-unselfish-art-prioritizing-yourself>

We must make sure we are attuned to who we are and what we want, otherwise we can make sacrifices that hurt or negatively impact us. Maintaining a certain regard for ourselves and engaging in self-compassion/self-care are fundamental to creating a good life for ourselves and the people who matter most to us. According to Doctor Lisa Firestone, prioritizing yourself is important because:

1. When we feel depleted, we have nothing to give.

When we fill our time prioritizing others, we can drain ourselves of energy. There is a difference between volunteering to feeling obligated to do something. If we are kind to ourselves, we are more likely to show up fully for the people to whom we extend ourselves.

2. Doing what we love recharges us.

When we are excited, we have more energy and positivity to offer people around us. Tending to our own needs and practising good self-care can alter the very quality of how we relate to others. People we are closest to get to experience us as the best and fullest versions of ourselves – happy and present.

3. We lose our real selves in the 'go go go' mentality.

When we fall into a cycle of constantly filling our day with things, we often tally up achievements that we use to prove our worth, but we rarely stop to experience what makes our hard work worth it to us. We may sacrifice our own interests altogether or stop enjoying personal connections that make us feel like ourselves. In doing so, we

give up aspects of ourselves.

4. We can drain ourselves when we do not get our own needs.

If we do not practise self-care and find healthy ways to meet our needs as individuals, we tend to have less energy, complain, feel more resentment and criticize ourselves. All of this is draining and is done when we set aside our own needs and wants.

5. We lose ourselves to our critical inner voice.

Many of us have an inner critic that tells us we must achieve certain objectives to be acceptable or worthy. This voice sometimes makes us feel like if we do anything for ourselves, we are selfish and listening to this voice can make us lose track of things.

6. We fail to practise self-compassion.

One risk of becoming lost in all things we should be doing for others is that we stop feeling ourselves and being self-aware. Being kind to ourselves and practising self-compassion improves our well-being and benefits people around it.

7. Our stress hurts us and those close to us.

Not prioritizing ourselves can increase our stress and this can begin to feel like a norm. Stress takes a serious toll on our mental and physical health. This prevents us from enjoying our lives and affects how we relate to others.

8. Driving ourselves can impair our performance.

Not practising self care can lead to you becoming distracted easily. If you do not put your needs first, then ultimately you will not be able to perform well and show up for others consistently and happily. When we give up our passions and diminish the quirks about us, we ruin the quality of our lives.

PRIORITIZING YOURSELF DURING WINTER:

Source: <https://lupusliqueens.org/2014/02/07/coping-with-the-winter-months-and-lupus/>

Winter can be difficult, especially due to the various fluctuations in temperature. Here are some tips from, *Lupus Alliance of Long Island*, to help you manage during the cooler months:

Keep Moving: This can be hard but if you keep your body moving you can notice pain levels decrease. Additionally, it does not have to be heavy activity, it could be as simple as a walk around the house.

Epsom Salts: Epsom salts help inflamed joints. Joint pain is very common in colder months. Soaking in a hot bath can make your body feel less stiff.

Icy Hot or Heating Pods: Both products are available over the counter. They help with achy joints, soothes some pain and discomfort, easy to travel with, and the pods keep you warm!

Bed sheets: Using flannel winter bed sheet allows more air to be trapped and makes a better insulator. Further, layer your sheets from thickest to thinnest to obtain extra warmth.

Use a fan to push warm air back towards you: In the winter when you have heat, the air will travel upwards. By using a fan this will allow the warm air to circulate down from the ceiling to your level.

When travelling always pack extra clothes and medication: This way if you are unable to go home you can still prevent a major problem/flare and keep stress levels low.

PRIORITIZING YOUR HEALTH:

Source: <https://www.lupus.org/resources/smoking-and-lupus-its-never-too-late-to-quit>

Smoking and lupus: It's never too late to quit

Thanks to a broad range of research studies, it's clear that smoking complicates and accelerates the ill effects of lupus. It can also lower the effectiveness of medications used to treat lupus. More than any lifestyle choice you can make, quitting cigarettes will have the most positive impact on your lupus, and your health in general. Lupus Foundation of America provided some facts about how smoking affects people with lupus:

- **Infections:** People with lupus are more prone to infections – specifically respiratory infections. Smoking cigarettes increases the risk of pneumococcal pneumonia and chronic bronchitis. Researchers also report that passive smoking, or regular exposure to secondhand smoke, also raises the risk of having this type of pneumonia.
- **Heart Health:** People with lupus on long-term moderate to high doses of prednisone have been found to develop heart disease (atherosclerosis) 20 to 30 years earlier than the general population.
- **Vascular Complications:** Lupus can affect the blood vessels and circulation in a variety of ways. Raynaud's phenomenon is common in people with lupus and when active, results in poor circulation to the hands and feet. Smoking contributes to blood vessel spasms and can magnify the effect of Raynaud's, making a mild case worse, and could result in severe damage to fingers and toes. Lupus vasculitis can cause narrowing of blood vessels and reduced blood flow to tissues and organs. Smoking narrows blood vessels and worsens peripheral vascular disease (poor blood supply).
- **Kidney Involvement:** Smoking contributes to elevated blood pressure, which worsens kidney disease. Kidney disease in lupus can result in hypertension.
- **Digestive Issues:** Smoking has harmful effects on all parts of the digestive system, contributing to such common disorders as heartburn.
- **Liver Function:** The liver breaks down many of the medications used to improve symptoms of lupus. Smoking affects the liver by changing the way it metabolizes drugs and alcohol. In some cases, this may influence the dose of

medication necessary to treat an illness.

- **Skin Involvement:** Lupus can cause hair loss and other skin symptoms. Studies conducted at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine have found lupus skin disease is more active in smokers than non-smokers.
- **Bone Health:** Smoking slows bone healing. Meanwhile medications used in the treatment of lupus--such as prednisone, anticonvulsants, antacids containing aluminum, and heparin—increase the risk for fragile bones that lead to osteoporosis.

So, where do you go from here? Quitting smoking is easier said than done. Just as lupus is unique for each person, so are the many reasons why you may choose to smoke, and the challenges you may face while trying to quit. It is going to take some effort and motivation on your part, but you do not have to do it alone.

Talk to your doctor about the best way to begin this journey. Working together, you can choose strategies that will not interfere with your lupus treatment plan or medications. If you feel comfortable, talk to your family and friends about your decision to quit smoking. The more support you have, the more likely it is that you will be successful.

Take it one day at a time and do not be disappointed by setbacks. Embrace the notion that quitting smoking is the right thing for you, and for controlling your lupus.



Source: <https://www.lupus.org/resources/prognosis-and-life-expectancy>

"Did you know with close follow up and treatment, 80 to 90 percent of people with non-organ threatening lupus can look forward to having the same lifespan as people without lupus?"

"It is true that medical science has not yet developed a method for curing lupus, and some people do die from the disease. However, for the majority of people living with the disease today, it will not be fatal. Lupus varies in intensity and degree. Some people have a mild case, others moderate and some severe, which tends to be more difficult to treat and control. For people who have a severe flare-up, there is a greater chance that their lupus may be life-threatening."



SAVE THE DATE - LAUGHS FOR LUPUS 2020!



Now that the New Year is here, have you made any resolutions?

How about wanting to laugh more?

Save the date of **May 7th 2020** as we prepare to host our

2nd Annual Laughs for Lupus

We are very excited to welcome the talented duo Two for the Show ([www.twofortheshow](http://www.twofortheshow.com)) as well as a few surprise comedic guests!

We hope you will plan on joining us on May 7, 2020 for another evening of laughs in support of lupus!

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more information



Source: <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-05-groundbreaking-genetic-discovery-lupus.html>

Ground-breaking genetic discovery shows why lupus develops:

"In a world first, researchers from The Australian National University (ANU) have shown previously ignored rare genetic mutations are a major cause of lupus. The discovery is set to change our understanding of the causes of disease and potentially save lives... Until now, the exact cause of the disease has been poorly understood. That's changed thanks to a genetic breakthrough by ANU researchers Dr. Simon Jiang, Dr. Vicki Athanopoulos, and Professor Carola Vinuesa."



RECIPES:

Cannellini Bean and Kale Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 (15-ounce) can fire-roasted tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup water
- 4 cups chopped kale
- 2 (15-ounce) cans cannellini beans rinsed and drained
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper



How to Make It:

Step 1: Heat the oil in a large soup pot or Dutch oven.

Step 2: Add the onion and cook until softened, about 3 minutes.

Step 3: Add the tomatoes with any juices in the can, the vegetable broth, and water.

Step 4: Bring to a boil.

Step 5: Add the kale and simmer for 10 minutes.

Step 6: Add the beans and cook until heated through, about 5 minutes.

Step 7: Season to taste with salt and pepper.

The recipes used by Lupus Canada have been reviewed and approved by

Heather Penney, Registered Dietitian.


Source: https://simplygluten-free.com/wprm_print/34079


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STAY CONNECTED:



 615 Davis Drive Suite 306
Newmarket, ON L3Y 2R2

 Toll Free: 1-800-661-1468
Local: 905-235-1714

 info@lupuscanada.org

 www.lupuscanada.org

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306-615 Davis Drive, Newmarket, ON L3Y 2R2