

What's your lupus story? We'd love to hear it. *Send us your thoughts and experiences to be featured in Lupus Canada's national monthly e-newsletter. Email your stories to leanne.mielczarek@lupuscanada.org*



This month is all about you! On July 24th, the world will celebrate International Self-Care Day where we can focus on leading a healthy lifestyle, both physically and mentally. There are many programs, especially in Canada, devoted to this day and even extending throughout the entire week! It is so easy to get caught up in work, school, kids or whichever other responsibilities you may have and they can easily take up all of your free time. As someone living with lupus, self-care is a vital component to leading a healthy life and so, this newsletter has some great information on how you can do just that!

We have a new look! To create synergy among our social media platforms, we have re-named our Monthly E-Newsletters "Let's Talk Lupus". Don't worry though - you will still be getting all of the same information you have been getting thus far! Thank you so much for everyone who has filled out our E-Newsletter Feedback Survey so far. We greatly appreciate your responses and have already taken some steps to implement your suggestions. If you have not yet participated and would like to please click [here](#).

On July 1st, we celebrated Canada Day! This holiday is a reminder to all Canadians of the amazing privilege we have to live in such a great nation, and also an opportunity to see some festive fireworks - Happy Canada Day!



HAPPY CANADA DAY!

*Wishing you a day filled with fun,
family and friends!*



DeMar DeRozan Player Created Ball Cap



The Toronto Raptors and New Era partnered again this year to bring a collection of limited-edition hats. As an Ambassador for Lupus Canada, DeMar DeRozan took part in this initiative to raise awareness for lupus. All net proceeds from his hat were donated to both the MLSE Foundation and Lupus Canada.

Lupus Canada thanks DeMar DeRozan, the Toronto Raptors and New Era for once again participating in this initiative as together they raised just over \$2,600 for lupus!

Students Help Bring Awareness to Lupus



Lupus Canada would like to extend a special thank you to Ms. Titian's grade 4 French Immersion class at Cootes Paradise Elementary for their recent donation honouring a parent living with lupus! It is the thoughtfulness of people like these students that enables us to continue helping people living with lupus and work towards life without lupus. We thank you for your dedication!

My Lupus Story by Mary Measures

I was diagnosed with lupus when I was in my mid-twenties. I am now 75.

I had been suffering from severe arthritis and was fortunate in that I had gone sun bathing a few days before my first appointment with the rheumatologist and showed up with a scaly rash on my back. The doctor immediately thought of lupus and ran some tests. In those days, they checked for the C 3, C 5 and C 50 blood complements. My C 3 and C 5 were within the normal range, but my C 50 was consistently low. I was asked to go to the Welseley Hospital in Toronto to participate in a special lupus study to check my C 2 levels. Sure enough , my C 2 was low and I was told that I was diagnosed with C 2 deficiency lupus. I was told that it seemed to be a less severe strain and I should be able to be treated with NSAIDs alone and that hopefully I would not require steroid therapy. This has been true, so far.

When I read some of the lupus stories, I believe that I do, in fact, have a milder form of the disease although I have had bouts of arthritis so severe that I literally had to crawl to the bathtub for a hot bath before starting my day. I also suffered from extreme fatigue, dizziness, hair loss and respiratory infections. I was unable to carry a baby but was lucky enough to adopt two wonderful daughters. It was difficult but I was able to hold a full time job and to raise my daughters alone when I became a single parent. Over the years, I think that I was able to link some of my flare-ups to stress, or perhaps the reverse was true. I was able to going into remission when my life was relatively stress free.

As I have aged, some of my symptoms have become less severe. I still have severe

arthritis pain but it is not as excruciating as it was when I was younger. It has been several years since I suffered hair loss although fatigue, dizziness and the respiratory infections continue. All in all, I consider that I have been very lucky for someone with a lupus diagnosis. I support Lupus Canada as my small effort to try to help those whose disease is much more serious than mine.

Taking Care of Your Body Overall

Source: <http://www.lupusny.org/about-lupus/lupus-coping-corner/taking-care-your-body-overall>

Last year around this time, I wrote about how to maintain good health during this season full of added demands. This year, I'd like to add to that the importance of overall wellness. Good health surely depends on keeping your medical appointments and taking medicine as prescribed. But it also means keeping your body and mind healthy overall. Living life with wellness in mind keeps you healthy and helps you cope with stress.

What is wellness?

Wellness can be defined in many ways. Wellness is an "...active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life," according to a definition from University of California-Davis.

The World Health Organization also provides a good description of wellness as "...a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being"

Exercise, stress management, and nutrition are three big pieces of the wellness picture.

Exercise

Exercise is helpful for keeping your heart healthy. It can also help reduce pain and strengthen muscles. It can also be helpful in reducing stress and improving your mood. Gentle, restorative [yoga](#), is often recommended for people with lupus. Be sure that your instructor is aware that you have lupus and can modify any of the movements for you. The same goes for any low-impact exercise. Low impact exercises can include low-impact aerobics and tai chi, and these can also be done in a swimming pool. Our Foundation has offered these both in and outside of a pool. Benefits of water-based exercise can include decreased pain.

Before starting any new physical activity, talk with your doctor. Also know your own limits. Don't push yourself beyond them, especially if you have issues of mobility,

flexibility, or pain. What do you feel you are capable of? What is comfortable for you? Do not do anything too demanding or extreme.

Stress Management

Yoga breathing is a type of yoga that takes little movement. It focuses on breathing and meditation. [Here](#) is a meditation video, done by Jenna Ritter who led the Yoga Breathing workshop at Balanced Living with Lupus: A Day of Wellness. This is a very simple video that you can follow along with at home.

[Studies have shown](#) that meditation can lessen stress and pain. And meditation is a tool you can take with you anywhere and use it almost any time.

Nutrition

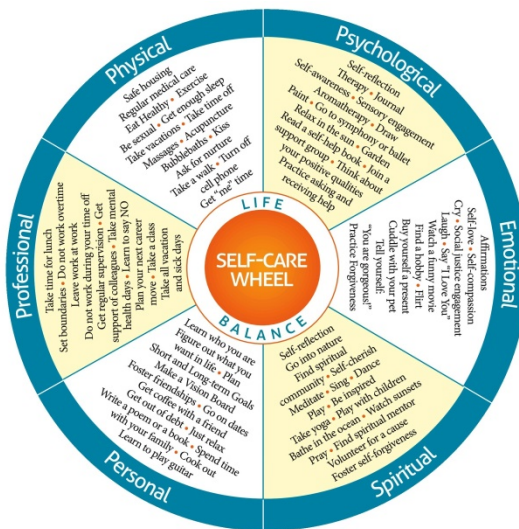
Good nutrition is another big wellness building block. What we put into our bodies impacts how we feel and how our bodies function. Often, with lupus, it is hard to feel well. So it's better to put things into our bodies that will not make us feel worse and can help our bodies feel better. Research shows that eating well can help reduce inflammation, prevent nutrient deficiencies, help maintain strong bones and muscles, and more. Hospital for Special Surgery summarized a [presentation about lupus and nutrition](#). Among many things, the article includes tips on how to add certain nutrients into your diet. If you need help figuring out what to eat, Dorian Romer, who led the workshop Unraveling the Mysteries of a Healthy Diet, has a [list of healthy recipes](#) on her website.

Overall Wellness

As you can see, wellness includes a wide variety of topics related to caring for both the mind and the body. The mind and body are connected. Some physical activities like low-impact exercise and yoga can help you feel good mentally as well as physically. If what you eat helps you feel good, then feeling good can help you feel happier.

These are just some of the ways to promote wellness; getting enough sleep, paying attention to how you look, taking care of your skin, hair and nails are others. Not pushing yourself too hard also helps.

Create Your Own Self-Care Wheel!



Source: <http://www.olgaphoenix.com/key-offerings/self-care-wheel/>

Self-Care Wheel is an empowering, affirming, and positive tool for helping professionals to manage stress, increase contentment and life satisfaction. With over 80 self-care exercises and healing modalities, Self-Care Wheel is a great beginning for your personalized, preventative, and sustainable Self-Care plan. Please see Starter Kit below for a quick guide on how to use the Wheel.

Print out your very own template [here](#) and start to reflect on what you may already be doing in lieu of your own life for self-care. This may be a great opportunity to implement new techniques!

Recipe: Summer Squash Pizza

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 medium zucchini, cut lengthwise into (1/4-inch-thick) slices
- 1 medium yellow squash, cut lengthwise into (1/4-inch-thick) slices
- Cooking spray
- 1 (12-inch) packaged pizza crust (such as Mama Mary's)
- 2 plum tomatoes, cut into (1/8-inch-thick) slices
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) finely grated pecorino Romano cheese
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1/2 teaspoon finely chopped fresh oregano

**Directions:**

1. Prepare grill.
2. Combine oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, zucchini slices, and yellow squash slices in a large bowl, tossing gently to coat. Place squash mixture on grill rack coated with cooking spray; grill 2 minutes on each side or until tender.
3. Reduce grill temperature to medium.
4. Lightly coat pizza crust with cooking spray; grill 1 minute on each side or until lightly toasted. Arrange zucchini and squash over crust. Arrange tomatoes over squash; sprinkle with pecorino Romano cheese. Grill 5 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Remove from grill; sprinkle with basil and oregano.

The recipes used by Lupus Canada have been reviewed and approved by Heather Penney, Registered Dietitian.

Source: <http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/summer-squash-pizza>



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