

## LET'S TALK LUPUS

October Monthly E-Newsletter



## Leaves Are Falling & Autumn Is Calling!

It is always exciting to see the seasons change! Fall is such a beautiful season in Canada so remember to enjoy everything from the cool weather, to leaves changing colour, to all the fun activities this season has to offer! Canadians far and wide will be celebrating **Thanksgiving on October 12th**, make sure to reflect on all the positive things in your life. Remember, Thanksgiving is a day to say 'thank you' and that is all it takes to make those people who make a positive impact on your life feel special.

Lupus Canada wants to express how thankful we are to all 6,920 of you for being a friend and supporting our work. We are honoured to be a part of your life and have an opportunity to communicate with all of you through our newsletters.

Further, **October 10th is World Mental Health Day**, a day devoted to advocating and raising awareness for those who struggle with mental health. By speaking out about the struggles and strength of those with mental illness, we can continue fighting to help them have access to more resources they require to live life to the fullest.

With the seasons changing and Thanksgiving quickly approaching, it may be hard to accept the new ways you may be celebrating this year. Even so, it is crucial to adapt and accept these changes. For this reason, Lupus Canada wants to emphasize the importance of change.

## DONATE NOW

your gift makes a difference

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“True life is  
lived when  
tiny changes  
occur.”

-Leo Tolstoy

LUPUS  
CANADA  
Life Without Limits

We are often resistant to change, and we don't realize that *change itself is constant*. Even if you resist or avoid it will enter your life just the same. When you initiate th change yourself, it's pretty easy to adapt to it, since it's wanted one. But are the unplanned and unexpected changes bad? What if all changes were good by default. In general, when looking back, *I realize that all the good things in my life are the results of changes that occurred in the past*. People usually avoid changes and prefer to sta in their comfort zones, but I am true believer that once you get the courage and take the first step to change, your life will become much better.

## *What are some benefits of change?*

### **1. Personal growth**

You grow and learn new things every time something changes. You discover new insights about different aspects of your life. You learn lessons even from changes that did not lead you to where you wanted to be.

### **2. Flexibility**

Frequent changes make you easily adapt to new situations, new environments, and new people. As a result, you do not freak out when something unexpectedly shifts.

### **3. Improvements**

We all have things in our lives we'd like to improve—finances, job, partner, house, etc. All of us know that nothing will improve by itself. We need to do things differently to make that happen. Without change, there'd be no improvements.

### **4. Life values**

From time to time changes make you re-evaluate your life and look at certain things from a different perspective. Depending on what the change is, it may also reinforce your life values.

### **5. The Snowball effect**

Often we give up because we cannot accomplish the difficult task of making a huge and immediate change. That is when small changes become extremely valuable. One shift at a time, small changes will eventually lead you to the desired big one.

### **6. Strength**

Not all changes lead you to pleasant periods of life. Unfortunately we do not live in fairy tale and sad things happen, too. Overcoming the tough period will make you stronger.

### **7. Progress**

Changes trigger progress. Things move forward and develop because of the them.

### **8. Opportunities**

One never knows what each change may bring. When you turn from your usual path there will be plenty of different opportunities waiting for you. Changes will bring new choices for happiness and fulfillment.

### **9. New beginnings**

Each change is a turning page. It is about closing one chapter and opening another one. Changes bring new beginnings and excitement to life.

### **10. Routine**

Remember the movie *Stranger than Fiction*? The main character Harold Crick does the same things in exactly same time for years. He leads a completely dull, extremely predictable, and uninteresting life. That is how your life would be without changes.

So next time you get the temptation to avoid or resist the change, aim instead to initiate the ones that will lead you to where you want be.

***And remember—if there were no change, there would be no butterflies!***

Source: <https://tinybuddha.com/blog/10-powerful-benefits-of-change-why-embrace-it/>

## Lupus News

Lupus Canada is excited to announce that members of the East Toronto Modern Quilt Guild have created a purple butterfly quilt in support of Lupus Canada! An online donation of a minimum \$50 to Lupus Canada enters the donor into the draw for this one of a kind lap quilt! Contest deadline is October 29th.



*The East Toronto Modern Quilt Guild is about taking the traditional art of quilting and giving it new life. Modern quilters work in a myriad of styles and define modern quilting in different ways. And as a collective, they strive to unite quilters of all ages to share in our love of modern quilting together.*

*"Modern quilts are primarily functional and inspired by modern design. Modern quilters work in different styles and define modern quilting in different ways, but several characteristics often appear which may help identify a modern quilt. These include, but are not limited to: the use of bold colours and prints, high contrast and graphic areas of solid colour, improvisational piecing, minimalism, expansive negative space, and alternate grid work. 'Modern traditionalism' or the updating of classic quilt designs is also often seen in modern quilting."*

*At the East Toronto Modern Quilt Guild, we strive to unite quilters of all ages and identities and to share our love of modern quilting together.*



To enter in the draw or to learn more information about this quilt please visit <https://lupuscanada.org/quilt/>

Source: <http://tmqg.blogspot.com/p/about-us.html>

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## Lupus Canada Informational Survey

Help Lupus Canada by completing an online survey about your experience with symptoms of lupus.

**LUPUS CANADA**



Lupus Canada is currently seeking volunteers to complete an online survey about your experience with symptoms of lupus. Participation involves

completing a short online survey related to how you experience and manage your symptoms. Survey closes on October 8th. We appreciate your support and input. Please click the survey link below to participate.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=F960yq\\_2BskJxg\\_2FrV8JXDKpDWrRRReot4H7XUvg9aUAKA\\_3D](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=F960yq_2BskJxg_2FrV8JXDKpDWrRRReot4H7XUvg9aUAKA_3D)

## CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Source: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/08/changes-canada-summer-jobs-program-help-businesses-and-young>

Once again, Lupus Canada is grateful for the Canada's Summer Jobs Program that allowed for the opportunity to hire a summer student within the national office located in Newmarket, ON. This year's student, Ariana Ranjbar, was allotted 1 of 70 000 jobs for youth between 15 and 30 years of age.

"The Government of Canada [took] unprecedented action to support workers, businesses, and all Canadians impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Right now, young people are facing serious challenges finding work. To build the foundations of strong communities, we need a strong workforce that includes good job opportunities for youth. That is why the government [worked] to help employers adapt to the realities of COVID-19, and support[ed] young Canadians as they [looked] for summer employment. The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced temporary changes to the Canada Summer Jobs program that [helped] employers hire summer staff and provide young Canadians access to the jobs they need[ed] during this unprecedented time.

Canada's small businesses increasingly depend on the employment of young Canadians. The changes to the Canada Summer Jobs program help[ed] small businesses hire and keep the workers they need so they can continue to deliver essential services."

## COPING WITH ISOLATION

In this new normal, some people can find these times to be stressful and difficult. It's already recognised that social isolation is one of our biggest killers so we should take as many steps as we can to make this as tolerable as possible for our mental health. As someone that lives on their own I understand this, I have no family and few friends who all live some distance away and now I won't be able to even meet up with them. However, having said that I understand that I need to be very careful so in reality I know this is the sensible thing to do.

So how can we make this a little bit more bearable?

#### **1. Stay In Touch:**

We are lucky that we have technology that will allow you to stay in touch with others, turn to things such as video calling, skype etc or just pick up the telephone and have a chat, that will make you feel less lonely.

#### **2. Digital Detox:**

We need information but I, and I'm sure many others, am finding that too much coronavirus news is making me more anxious as it's currently very negative and all doom and gloom. Perhaps make a rule only look at the news twice a day rather than every hour and be extremely careful where you get information, use trusted websites and social media.

#### **3. Plan Your Day:**

Give your day structure and purpose, make a plan of what you want to do. For example 15 minutes for impact workout from youtube, then read for half an hour, etc. This may change depending on how you feel but will help you have a sense of purpose. Make sure you keep your regular routine if you are isolated at home: take your regular medication, eat healthily, shower, get dressed, put on your makeup I never bother with makeup when I'm at home but I do my nails regularly. It can also help to go to bed and wake up at regular times so include that in your routine.

#### **4. Mindfulness:**

Mindfulness has long been recognised as a way of helping to reduce anxiety and depression, there are a lot of programmes online so you should find one that suits you. Try activities such as baking/colouring/puzzles which can all help you relax. Maybe take the opportunity to learn a new skill which is very good for your brain, there are also plenty of video's online to help you do that.

#### **5. Get Some Fresh Air:**

You may feel claustrophobic or trapped if you have to stay isolated, so make sure you get some fresh air (even opening the windows helps). You can still go for a walk when you're isolated, if you don't have a garden pop to your local park or walk round your local streets. If you live in a busy area it's better to go outside when you know it's quieter such as early morning before school runs etc or late evening, have a look at the stars!



Source: <https://www.lupus.org.uk/lupus-trust-uk-news/2020/3/17/coping-with-isolation-coronavirus>

## DOGS AND LUPUS PATIENTS





Dogs have been healers since wolves and humans began bonding thousands of years ago. Our four-legged helpers lead the blind, ease anxiety, and even help prevent an early death. These multi-talented animals also help ease the symptoms of lupus using their amazing superpower healing abilities. Many people across the United States include a dog in their lupus management plan for the numerous advantages the animal brings into treatment.

#### ***Mood Boosters***

Dogs are wonderful mood boosters. They never judge their human, never ask questions, and provide unconditional love, even when they aren't feeling their best. This act alone helps a lupus patient avoid some side effects of the disease. For example, the onset of Raynaud's phenomenon, a possible lupus side effect, may be caused by stress. Studies prove that playing with, or even petting, a dog increases oxytocin, a stress-reducing chemical, in the brain. Dogs have been proven to reduce depression, a common side effect in people with lupus. Further, experts recommend moderate exercise in humans to increase those feel-good brain chemicals, so regular walks with the pooch help boost moods. Those with lupus often walk dogs before dusk or dawn, to avoid the sunlight, which has a higher damaging effect for these individuals.

#### ***Illness Detectors***

Getting other illnesses with lupus is common as this autoimmune disease slowly breaks down the body's natural fighting systems. Some dogs help in this area by detecting oncoming or existing illnesses. Dogs have been known to find cancers before human doctors and warn their humans before a seizure happens. Having a dog trained to detect these anomalies within the human body increases the safety of the person with lupus. A human has a higher survival rate after paying attention to a dog communicating an issue, and seeking proper medical attention. The CDC also reports that dog ownership helps reduce heart disease, an added side benefit to those with lupus.

#### ***Taking Care of Someone Else***

Doctors advise those with lupus to eat a healthy, sensible diet to aid the body in fighting invaders, as the immune system is no longer able to help. Owning a dog, and therefore having another living being for whom to care, helps some of these individuals eat better, especially if living alone. When the human strives to feed the dog healthy food under the table, following suit on top of the table gets easier. Sharing a meal with the dog is also a strong possibility, as there is a full list of healthy food items that are good for human and master. People with lupus also gain a sense of responsibility and reward when caring for a dog. As lupus progresses, everyday activities become harder, and the human cannot complete some common daily activities. Taking care of a dog gives the person a sense of purpose and accomplishment in the face of this sometimes debilitating disease.

Researchers believe dogs have been domesticated for up to 60,000 years. This is centuries of healing power lying patiently at our feet. Everyone, from those with lupus to the most physically fit, benefit from dog ownership. Caring, loyal, and beneficial to humans, the dog is the most sensible, logical, and perfect pet.

Source: <https://lupusla.org/dogs-and-lupus-patients-the-how-tos-of-doggie-help/>

## LUPUS AND COVID-19: HAND SKIN CARE

Source: <https://www.lupusuk.org.uk/hand-skin-care/>

We know regular handwashing is the most important way to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and to protect ourselves from contracting the virus.

Good hand-washing technique means a thorough wash with soap for at least 20 seconds, including tops and palms of the hands, wrists and between the fingers. Many people with lupus have sensitive skin and involvement is common in the disease, with 60-70% of reporting some skin problem.

### **Why is hand washing so harsh on our skin?**

The outermost layer of our skin is composed of oils and wax, and it acts as both a shield from the outside and a guard that maintains natural moisture in the skin. This natural barrier is broken down by the suds created by soap while washing hands, which does not discriminate between unwanted oil, germs, debris and natural oils in the skin.

Repeated exposure to water, soap and alcohol hand gel can cause dry skin, and what is known as irritant contact dermatitis – a form of eczema. Irritant contact dermatitis can cause the skin to itch, become sore and red, and develop small blisters or painful cracks. If you already have dry skin either from a skin condition, from medication, or because you are washing your hands more than normal then you may be particularly susceptible to this.

### **Hand management tips:**

Here are some tips on minimising the impact of frequent handwashing on the skin:

- Products known as emollient soap-substitutes perform the same hand-sanitising role as traditional soaps. However, these provide moisture to the skin and minimise the risk of irritation and dryness. Your pharmacist can help you find a suitable product.
- Dry your hands fully after washing by patting them dry, not rubbing.
- Moisturisers (emollients) are an essential part of treating hand dermatitis. They help repair the damaged outer skin and lock moisture inside the skin making it soft and supple again. They should be applied after handwashing, repeatedly throughout the day, and whenever the skin feels dry. Avoid products that contain fragrance as these can be irritating to chapped, sensitive skin. Creams and ointments are better than lotions. The use of hand cream won't prevent your soap and hand sanitiser being effective.
- Some people find overnight moisturising treatments beneficial. Apply a generous layer of a plain moisturiser just before you go to bed, then put on a pair of clean cotton gloves and leave overnight.
- When the hands are going to come into contact with water or detergents, but when not specifically washing the hands (such as when washing up, shampooing a child's

hair, or using cleaning products), wearing gloves that provide a barrier will help to keep the skin's barrier intact.

## HOUSEPLANTS AND IMPROVING OVERALL HEALTH

Being in nature is proven to improve your mood. Scientific studies have shown that if you venture out into nature every day you are bound to be a happier person. Exploring parks, beaches, and outdoor spaces are wonderful when you are able to be outside for extended periods of time, but what if that isn't always an option because of chronic illness? *If you have chronic illnesses, such as Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis or Multiple Sclerosis that cause you to limit your sunlight exposure or time being outdoors, there is a small simple solution - bring the nature indoors with houseplants.*



## *How do plants boost your happiness and health?*

*Plants are proven to be good for your overall health. Looking back into elementary school science class basics, without plants on earth, we would not be living. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, "During photosynthesis in green plants, light energy is captured and used to convert water, carbon dioxide, and minerals into oxygen and energy-rich organic compounds." Plants are our natural air filters, which are especially great for stale indoor air. Research by NASA revealed that houseplants can remove up to 87 percent of air toxins in 24 hours.*

Not only are plants scientifically great at cleansing the air around us, they are also natural mood boosters. Doing the small everyday acts of caring for plants, such as watering them, putting them in the best sunlight, getting your hands in the new soil and pruning their leaves gives a wonderful sense of satisfaction. According to a study from Texas Agriculture & Medicine University, people who spend their time caring for nature are more likely to care for others. So basically caring for plants make us more caring people!

Keeping plants around can also improve memory and concentration. According to a study, plants help with better quality and accuracy in your work; they help improve memory retention by 20 percent, they increase creativity by 45 percent and they boosted productivity by 38 percent. Therefore having plants around is especially good if you work from home or need to focus on various projects.

*Now, let's talk plants.*

Some plants need lots of sunshine and water, while others need limited amounts of either. You can find most of these plants at your local hardware or garden store such as Lowe's or Home Depot, or specialty garden shops. Often time's grocery stores also carry different houseplants. Feel free to ask the garden or plant-space associate more about specific plants. There are also many online spaces and pages that speak in depth about the maintenance and ideal environments for certain houseplants. Below are a few examples of houseplants to start out with, especially if you don't have a green thumb and are new to the plant world.

### **Succulents**

Succulents can vary in shape, size, and color. Some have flowers while others are various shades of green. Succulents are sure to add an interesting texture to a space compared to other plants. Succulents originated in very dry climates; therefore most times they fare well without being watered often. Just be sure to put them in pots with good drainage (holes in the bottom of the pot) and place them somewhere they can get lots of sunshine.

### **Snake Plant**

This plant is one of the best houseplants and best air purifiers. It has a reputation for being long-lasting and "un-killable." The important element to note is to not overwater it! Give it more water only if the soil is dry. According to Greenery NYC, snake plants are known to survive in dimly lit areas or spaces where people like to turn up the AC. The roots of this plant are thick and tubular, making them able hold on to water for extended periods of time.

### **ZZ Plant**

This plant is accustomed to long periods of drought, following with bursts of generous rain. The ZZ (*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*) is a semi-succulent native to the semi-arid regions of Eastern Africa, according to Greenery NYC. This is a great plant for those who occasionally forget to water their plants. Indirect bright light is ideal for the ZZ plant, but it can survive most types of lighted areas. The ZZ plant has an intricate rhizomous root system, which holds as much water as it can absorb. These plants leaves are also thick and shiny; every so often dust off the leaves off gently, so that the ZZ can absorb light more efficiently. Do not continue to water the ZZ plant if the soil is still wet from a previous watering.

A few other good houseplants to start out with are the bird of paradise plant, *Monstera deliciosa* (Swiss cheese plant), *Aglaonema Silver Bay* or cacti. Make sure to do your research on how much to water each plant, its ideal sunlight location and what sort of soil it thrives best in. Adding houseplants to different rooms in your house will add many benefits to your mental health and happiness, not to mention they are a fun pop of color. For most people plants are not harmful, other than a few plants that may cause allergies. Another important note is if you have children or pets, having certain plants may be toxic to them. Be sure to check with your doctor or veterinarian first before purchasing certain plants, to take safety precautions towards allergies or toxins.

Source: <https://lupuschick.com/why-houseplants-improve-overall-health/>

## **SICK KIDS: TIPS FOR YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH LUPUS**

**The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)**, have created an informational pamphlet named, '**Tips for Young People Living with Lupus**'. We believe it is important for children living with lupus to be aware and read sources like these so they can prepare and be cautious of particular activities. This pamphlet includes the following subject matters:

- **Going to school:** If you are going to post-secondary school register with disabilities services/access centre (each school has a different name for this support) at the

beginning of the school year—even if you are feeling well most of the time! Look into the possible accommodations available, so you can get the best of what is offered if you need it.

- **Going to work:** Some people at work might need to know about your Lupus. Think about who you could talk to about your Lupus and practice how you might say this with someone you trust.
- **Sexual Health:** Learn about the impact of your condition on sexual health and reproduction. For example, women with Lupus need to consult their doctors about birth control options because some oral contraceptives can have serious consequences (such as blood clots if you have certain antibodies). It is very important to plan your pregnancies with an obstetrician who understands Lupus. Pregnant women who have Lupus have an increased risk of complications, but a special obstetrician can help you lower the risk. Many people with Lupus say that the only effect Lupus has on their sexuality is that if they are having a flare, they get very tired and don't have energy for sex. Otherwise, there is no reason why someone with Lupus cannot have a healthy sex life.
- **Drugs and Alcohol:** Teens often try cigarettes, alcohol or drugs. It is important to learn about the effects of smoking, drugs and alcohol on your Lupus, and their interactions with your medications. We suggest totally staying away from alcohol if you are on methotrexate as you can get liver damage even with small amounts of alcohol. If you decide that you are going to drink, the safest time would be 24 hours before you take your methotrexate, but it still isn't totally safe. If you have kidney problems and are planning to drink alcohol, you should drink one glass of water for every alcoholic drink, so that you don't get dehydrated. This is actually good advice for anyone, as dehydration is one of the main causes of hangovers. If you are going to drink, do so in moderation—drunk people usually forget their medications, are vulnerable to assault and act really stupid.

Source: <https://www.sickkids.ca/pdfs/good2go/59876-5.2.7%20Tips%20for%20Young%20Adults%20Living%20with%20Lupus.pdf>

**RESEARCH & RESOURCES**

**Leslie Skeith, MD**

**Megan Barber, MD, PhD**

**The Lupus Foundation of America and Lupus Canada are very excited to announce Leslie Skeith, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Division of Hematology & Hematological Malignancies, University of Calgary and Megan Barber, MD, PhD, clinical lecturer in the Division of Rheumatology, University of Calgary as the 2020 Lupus Canada Catalyst Award recipients.**

For more information please visit <https://lupuscanada.org/research/research-funding-programs/>.





## Wild Rice Stuffing with Dried Cherries

PREPARATION: 30 MIN

COOKING: 1 HOUR

SERVES: 12

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup butter, divided
- 2 cups thinly sliced leek (about 1 large)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups fat-free, lower sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup uncooked wild rice
- 2 cups uncooked long-grain brown rice
- ½ cup finely chopped carrot
- 2/3 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 1.2 cup chopped dried sweet cherries
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced

### Directions

- 1** Heat 2 tablespoons butter in a large saucepan over medium heat; swirl to coat. Add leek, thyme, and 1/2 teaspoon salt; sauté 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 3 cups water, chicken broth, and wild rice; cover. Increase heat to high; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 30 minutes. Stir in brown rice; cover and simmer 30 minutes. Remove from heat
- 2** Preheat oven to 400°.
- 3** Heat remaining 2 tablespoons butter over high heat in a large skillet; swirl to coat. Add turnip, celery, carrot, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt; sauté 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium; cook 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.
- 4** Combine rice mixture, turnip mixture, pecans, cherries, and onions in a large bowl. Spoon stuffing into a 13 x 9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish. Cover with foil; bake at 400° for 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.



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

Source: <https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/wild-rice-stuffing-dried-cherries>

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