

**LUPUS  
CANADA**  
Life Without Lupus



**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](mailto:leanne.mielczarek@lupuscanada.org)*

*Happy New Year!*  
JANUARY E-NEWSLETTER

And just like that, another year has passed! With the start of a brand new year, many people set out to make resolutions on how they can better themselves or change something in their lives. One thing to keep in mind is that, if you don't have anything you want to change or if you feel comfortable with where you are right now, that is great! Often, there is pressure on what people *should* be doing but, it is always a good idea to focus on what has *already* been done! Everything is a work in progress! In this newsletter, you can find the article "Living With Lupus: Eliminating the Shoulds" that will give great insight on prioritizing what works for you and your illness, especially because of how much lupus can vary from person to person.

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! Thank you!

Happy New Year from everyone at Lupus Canada!

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## ***Together we are making a difference***

***Together*** in 2017 we impacted the lives of people living with lupus in so many ways. Here are just a few ways ...

***Together*** we lifted some of financial burden for 5 post-secondary students living with lupus

***Together*** we backed Lupus Canada's 2 inaugural Catalyst Grants in support of much-

needed lupus research

**Together** our support of these research projects has helped move us that much closer to better prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lupus

**Together** we helped raise the much needed awareness of this under-funded and under-recognized disease

**Thank you to all our loyal donors for your ongoing support of Lupus Canada!**



## #ISangForLupusChallenge

Friday January 19, 2018

For one night only and for a good cause, the Mike on Much Podcast is taking their show on the road. Mike Veerman, Max Kerman and Shane Cunningham will record from the back room at the Rivoli in downtown Toronto on Friday, January 19th to raise money for Lupus Canada.

Five million people worldwide are affected by the autoimmune disease lupus – including Shane’s wife Alex – so this is near and dear to their hearts. In an effort to spread awareness, Shane created the #ISangForLupusChallenge – encouraging fans to post a video to social media singing earnestly and un-ironically, then nominate three friends to take the challenge and make a donation.

This interactive live event will give regular pod listeners a look at how the guys make their show, a feature interview with a special guest to-be-announced, live music and other surprises! All proceeds from the event will be donated to Lupus Canada.

Tickets to the show are now on-sale! Special guests, live music and surprises await. Don’t forget to RSVP to the event on Facebook and help spread the word:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/> ...

<https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1611594/#ISangForLupusChallenge#YYZ>

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## Living With Lupus: Eliminating the Shoulds

Taken from [Despite Lupus Blog](#)

I had a million things to do today. Things I needed to. Things I could have done. Things I *should* have done. But as I geared up to tackle my to-do list, I found myself unable to motivate. Instead, I sat here, looking out at the water, sipping a cup of tea. I just didn't want to pull myself away. I couldn't pull myself away. So I decided maybe I shouldn't.

I was reminded of an important aspect of managing life with a chronic illness. I call it "Eliminating the "Shoulds". Every time I tell myself I "should" do something, I pause. Is this something that *really* has to happen? Is it an absolute necessity? Will there be serious consequences if it doesn't happen at this very moment? This objectivity is vital during a flare, but I find it equally as important when my disease is under control. Because managing my "shoulds" helps to manage my disease.

When I put my physical and mental health first, I'm able to prioritize in a way that works *with* my disease, rather than against it. Instead of running one last errand that could wait until tomorrow, sending another email that isn't expected until later, or struggling to fold that last load of laundry, I make a conscious choice to ignore the "should" I hear in my head. Instead, I use those extra moments to relax, regroup, or even just to breathe. My cup of tea was just what I needed this morning. I may even shrug off a "should" again tomorrow!

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## Staying Positive With Lupus

### ***Keeping a Positive Outlook Despite Lupus***

Source: <http://lupus.newlifeoutlook.com/staying-positive-with-lupus/>

When you live with a chronic illness, jumping on the positivity train is definitely a challenge — especially when you are still in the midst of accepting your [diagnosis](#). It's normal to feel frustrated and sad, but if we allow ourselves to stay in a negative state, lupus symptoms are more likely to be activated by the resulting stress.

When I was diagnosed with lupus, daily tasks once done with casual ease were rendered impossible as physical and emotional pain invaded all aspects of the life I once knew. I was consumed with the fear that nothing would ever be the same again.

I was in mourning for the life I thought I would have, and took no comfort in the encouraging words of others. "Look on the bright side" was definitely the last thing I wanted to hear.

But staying positive is not about being happy all the time; it's about achieving a healthy balance between being realistic and choosing to interpret a situation in the best light.

Reaping the health benefits of a positive outlook doesn't happen overnight — it's something we all work on every day throughout our lives. If you're ready to turn your lemons into lemonade, the following suggestions could be your first steps towards a brighter view of your lupus world.

### ***Health Benefits***

According to *Harvard Health Publications*, [studies have shown](#) pessimists are three times more likely than optimists to have heart attacks, have higher blood pressure, and are more likely to develop viral symptoms. Another study found that the most pessimistic individuals had a 42 percent higher rate of death than the most optimistic, proving that optimism improves overall health and longevity.

### ***Find Your Positive Squad***

Constantly negative people are like black holes; they suck the life out of a room and, inevitably, out of you. People with lupus have to conserve their energy, so it's important to surround yourself with individuals who do not drain you.

Be conscious of how you feel around certain people. Make a mental note of people you need to limit time with and, if necessary, cease contact with toxic individuals.

Create your own "positive squad," which could include friends, family, your online lupus family, and/or a neutral individual like a counselor, psychologist or wellness coach.

Remember, the people in your life should uplift and inspire you, not drag you deeper into sadness or despair. Having a positive squad by your side is a huge factor in helping you maintain an optimistic outlook on your life with lupus.

### ***Positive Reminders***

Reading positive quotes is a strategy that has worked well for me in my search for optimism. Depending on how I am feeling, I search for inspiring quotes and pictures to put on my computer desktop or on my cell phone lock screen.

I look at my desktop and phone several times a day, so it is an easy and simple way to redirect negative thinking on a regular basis. If you prefer positive reminders without

the technology, you can put up sticky notes or buy a white board for your fridge.

### ***Let Gratitude Ground You***

When life is chaotic and your health is unstable, finding things to be grateful for can be a huge challenge. A gratitude board is a great, creative way to express what you are thankful for when you aren't able to find the words during moments of stress.

A gratitude board is a vision board about the people, experiences and things in your life you are thankful for. It's as simple as buying a poster board or corkboard and pasting/pinning visual examples that represent your gratitude.

Try to include the positive things that have come out of having lupus:

- What have you discovered about yourself?
- Do you take care of yourself better now?
- Has it strengthened your relationships?
- Has it led you to new interests?

### ***Healthy Distraction***

We all have bad days, but the key is not to linger in that negative space for too long. Here are three examples of healthy distractions that could help lift you out of a slump:

- Take a walk to clear your head or put on your favorite music and have a dance party in your living room (even if you're just tapping your toes).
- Escape into a book, a movie, a play, or your favorite television series.
- Do something kind for someone else.

### ***Goal Setting***

Goals and dreams are definitely affected by a lupus diagnosis. To those who have been able to cultivate a positive outlook, this new reality does not necessarily mean certain aspirations are hopeless.

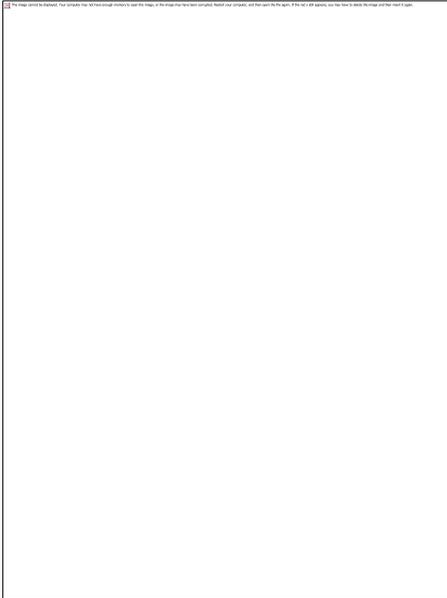
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## **Recipe: Sesame Butterflied Chicken**

Serves 2, Cooks in 18 minutes

**Ingredients:**

- *3½ oz fine rice noodles*
- *2 x 4-oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts*
- *peanut oil*
- *4 scallions*
- *½ a Napa cabbage (5 oz)*
- *7 oz sugar snap peas*
- *½–1 fresh red chile*
- *2 limes*
- *1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce*
- *1 tablespoon peanut butter*
- *2 tablespoons plain yogurt*
- *¾-inch piece of fresh gingerroot*
- *2 teaspoons raw sesame seeds*



**Directions:**

- Put a grill pan on a high heat. In a bowl, cover the noodles with boiling kettle water to rehydrate them. Use a sharp knife to slice into the chicken breasts, then open each one out flat like a book. Rub each with 1 teaspoon of peanut oil and a small pinch of sea salt and black pepper, then grill for 8 minutes, or until golden and cooked through, turning halfway.
- Trim the scallions and rattle them through the finest slicer on your food processor, followed by the Napa cabbage, sugar snap peas, and chile. Dress with the juice of 1 lime and the soy sauce. In a small bowl, mix the peanut butter with the yogurt and the juice of the remaining lime, peel and finely grate in the ginger, mix again, taste, and season to perfection.
- Remove the chicken to a board and slice, lightly toasting the sesame seeds in the residual heat of the grill pan and sprinkling them over the chicken before serving. Drain the noodles, divide between your plates with the chicken, slaw, and peanut sauce, mix it all up and tuck on in.

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

Source: <http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/chicken-recipes/sesame-butterflied-chicken/>

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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](mailto:info@lupuscanada.org)

 [www.lupuscanada.org](http://www.lupuscanada.org)

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