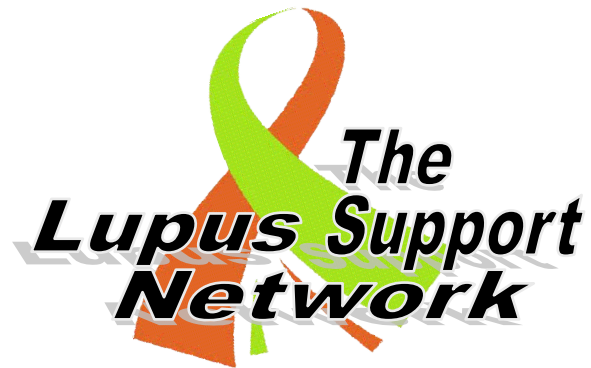


People Say the Craziest Things

- "When I can't play like the rest of the children, some of them call me lazy."
- "You don't look like you're sick."
- "I have to be in homebound for school—my friends say I must be faking it because I look fine."
- "This kid in school asked me once if I was born in a wheelchair."
- "An adult once said to my mother when she was explaining about my disease 'oh, maybe he'll outgrow it.'"
- "I have to take prednisone and my face swells terribly. Kids often call me fatty, or chipmunk."
- "The thing I hate the worst is when anyone says how brave I am. Like I have a choice."



1108 Airport Blvd., Ste. C
P.O. Box 17841

Phone: (850) 478-8107

Fax: (850) 478-0451

Website: www.lsnflorida.org

Email: questions@thelupussupportnetwork.org

Executive Dir.: wanda@thelupussupportnetwork.org

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When Children Get Lupus—
A Guide For Children
and Parents



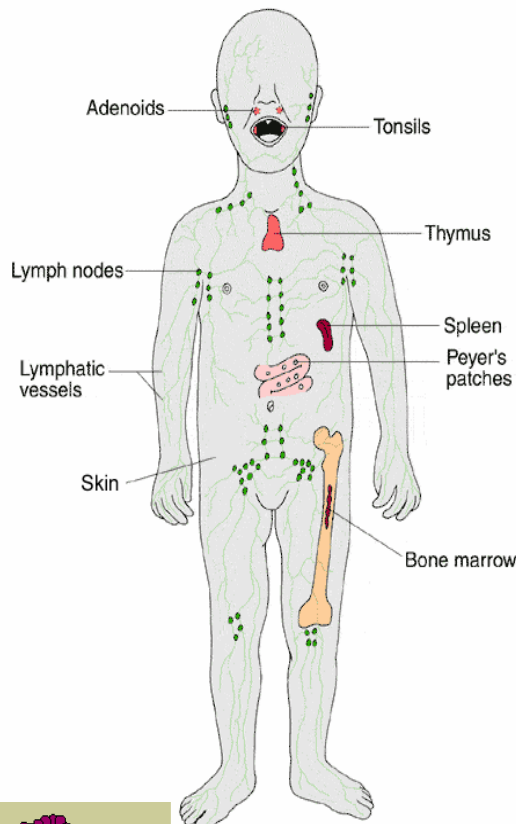
Lupus Lewy....

educating children about Lupus!

(850) 478-8107

The Immune System

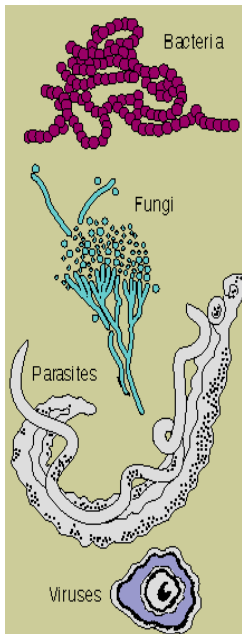
The Immune System



The Importance of the Immune System

The immune system is a body-wide network of cells and organs that defend the body against attacks by "foreign" invaders such as bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses.

In lupus, the immune system confuses the healthy body with these "foreign" invaders and begins to attack itself.



Why Did I Get Sick?

You didn't get sick because:

- You didn't listen to your mother or father
- You had bad thoughts
- You were mad at your sister or brother
- You told a lie
- You took things that didn't belong to you
- You caught some germs from kids who were sick

Being sick **just happens**. And it happens to most everybody at some time or other.

To Tell or Not To Tell

Deciding to tell or not to tell is your choice. Here are some thoughts from other children to help you with this decision.

Reasons children don't tell:

- "My problems are nobody else's business."
- "If my classmates knew, they would make fun of me."
- "If I told people, they'd treat me differently—special—that would be awful."
- "If kids found out, they would stop being my friends."
- "Everybody would stare at me. It would be horrible."

To Tell or Not To Tell—continued

Reasons children do tell:

- "It's tough to keep secrets from your friends."
- "When I have a secret, it's like I'm carrying a backpack with a bowling ball in it."
- "Telling people about my problem is like telling them that I trust them. That I like them."
- "Why not? Then they understand when I have to go to the hospital."

★ Teasing ★

Kids who feel good about themselves and who work on having a good sense of humor have an easier time than kids who let the teasing get to them. Joking may make the teaser disappear...well, OK, the person may not disappear, but the teasing often 'bites the dust'.

It's important to remember that teasing says much more about the person who's doing it than it does about the person who's putting up with it.

A lot of time kids tease when they're scared or when they don't understand what's going on or when they're just plain unhappy.

An important thing to remember is that you've got an incredible power. It's easy to forget about it, but here's what it's all about. You have the power to choose how to act when someone teases you.