



## Quick Tip Sheet for Supporting Students with Lupus

### General Overview:

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) is a chronic autoimmune disease where the immune system loses its ability to tell the difference between foreign substances and its own cells and tissue, and then makes antibodies directed against itself. This can lead to organ damage over time if left untreated. SLE can affect almost any organ system in the body, including skin, lungs, kidneys, blood vessels and the central nervous system. Symptoms of the disease may vary from day to day or even throughout the course of the day. Flares of SLE are unfortunately impossible to predict. Below, you will find common effects (physical, emotional, and learning) and accommodations to support the effects.

### Physical Symptoms (may vary from patient to patient):

- Joint pain/arthritis
- Muscle aches
- Low grade fever
- Rashes
- Mouth sores
- Headache
- Hair loss
- Visual disturbances
- Cold sensitivity resulting in fingers turning white or blue
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Sensitivity to sun exposure

### Emotional Side Effects (may vary from patient to patient):

- Change in mood (due to fatigue and pain; as well as types of medications)
- Isolated from classmates
- Stress Related to missed time from school and fear for future disability

### Emotional Side Effects (may vary from patient to patient):

- Decreased concentration (due to fatigue and pain)
- Poor academic performance (due to absences and fatigue)
- Tardy/absences (due to morning pain or appointments)

## **Accommodations:**

- **Limitation of activities in physical education class**
- **Modify physical education class (as needed)**
- **Use of sunscreen and/or hat prior to anytime spent outdoors**
- **Unlimited access to drinking water and to restroom facilities (allow water bottle and a hall pass, as needed)**
- **Use of school elevator (will need elevator key or pass)**
- **Special plan for fire or tornado drills**
- **Wearing gloves or extra clothing to stay warm and prevent color changes to fingertips and toes**
- **Limited amount of walking long distances or climbing stairs**
- **Notifications of illness outbreaks (e.g., strep, chickenpox, Mononucleosis) to parents as student may have suppressed immune system due to medications**
- **Access to snacks (if taking medications during school)**
- **Extra set of books in the classroom and at home**
- **Access to reteaching and/or tutoring for missed instruction**
- **Access to homebound instruction for extended absences**
- **Focus on QUALITY over QUANTITY with respect to assignments**