



# The Beacon

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## Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

*“Guiding your way to better health management”*

### What Is Lupus?

Lupus is an autoimmune disease, which means that the body's natural defense system (immune system) attacks its own tissues instead of attacking foreign substances like bacteria and viruses. This causes inflammation. Inflammation causes swelling, pain, and tissue damage throughout the body. If you develop severe lupus, you may have problems with your kidneys, heart, lungs, nervous system, or blood cells. Lupus is the common name for systemic lupus erythematosus, also called SLE.

Although the disease is lifelong some people with lupus have only mild symptoms. Most people can control their symptoms and prevent severe damage to their organs. They do this by seeing their doctors often for checkups, getting enough rest and exercise, and taking medicines.

### What causes lupus?

The exact cause of lupus is not known. Experts believe that some people are born with certain genes that affect how the immune system works and that they are more likely to get lupus. Then a number of other factors can trigger lupus attacks.

These include viral infections, including the virus that causes mononucleosis, and sunlight. Although these things can trigger lupus, they may affect one person but not another person.

### What are the symptoms?

Lupus symptoms vary widely, and they come and go. The times when symptoms get worse are called relapses, or flares. The times when symptoms are not so bad are called remissions.

Common symptoms include feeling very tired and having joint pain or swelling (arthritis), a fever, and a skin rash. The rash often happens after you have been in the sun. Mouth sores and hair loss may occur. Over time, some people with lupus have problems with the heart, lungs, kidneys, blood cells, or nervous system.

### How is lupus diagnosed?

There is no single test for lupus. Because lupus affects different people in different ways, it can be hard to diagnose. Your doctor will check for lupus by examining you, asking you questions about common symptoms, and doing some blood tests. It is easier for your doctor to

diagnose lupus if you have the most common symptoms and your blood has certain proteins. These proteins are called antinuclear antibodies, or ANAs.

### How is it treated?

Lupus is treated by:

- Applying corticosteroid cream for rashes.
- Taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for mild joint or muscle pain and fever.
- Taking antimalarial medicines to treat fatigue, joint pain, skin rashes, and lung inflammation.
- Taking corticosteroids if other medicines are not controlling your symptoms.

Because corticosteroids are powerful medicines and can cause serious side effects, the doctor will recommend the lowest dose that will give the most benefit. The doctor may also recommend other medicines that slow down the immune system.

## Med-Cert News

The Med-Cert staff wishes you a very Happy Easter!!!

## Did you know??

55% of people yawn within 5 minutes of seeing someone else yawn.



## Ask A Nurse

**Q: I'm too squeamish to try acupuncture. Does acupressure work and can I perform it on myself?**

**A:** This ancient Asian technique may be helpful for a number of conditions, but with the exception of a couple of easily located spots. I recommend having a qualified professional show you where and how to perform it on yourself.

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**Q: The enteric coating on aspirin helps prevent stomach ulcers, right?**

**A:** No. The coating helps aspirin pass through the stomach without causing irritation or heartburn, then dissolves in the small intestine, allowing aspirin to be absorbed into the bloodstream.

## April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

272,350 Americans were victims of sexual violence last year. If you are a victim of rape, abuse or incest contact the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. RAINN operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1.800.656.HOPE and the National Sexual Assault [Online Hotline](http://www.rainn.org) at [rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org).

## DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

### Med-Cert provides:

*Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments*

**For information on any of our services, please call**

**866-261-5657 (toll free). We are on the**

**Internet. Visit us at:**

[www.medcertinc.com](http://www.medcertinc.com)

## Recipe Corner



### Mustard-Roasted Fish

#### Ingredients

- 4 (8-ounce) fish fillets such as red snapper
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 ounces creme fraiche
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard
- 2 tablespoons minced shallots
- 2 teaspoons drained capers

#### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 °F
2. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. (You can also use an ovenproof baking dish.) Place the fish fillets skin side down on the sheet pan. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper.
3. Combine the creme fraiche, 2 mustards, shallots, capers, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. Spoon the sauce evenly over the fish fillets, making sure the fish is completely covered.
4. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish, until it's barely done. (The fish will flake easily at the thickest part when it's done.) Be sure not to overcook it! Serve hot or at room temperature with the sauce from the pan spooned over the top.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD and Prevention magazine.