

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Lupus

Systemic lupus erythematosus or SLE is a disease that is not fully understood. Your immune system normally fights infection and the development of cancers. But it sometimes malfunctions. In fact it attacks your own body. Your immune system thinks your own body is the bad guy. Ninety percent of those affected are women of childbearing age.

People often have fatigue, malaise, intermittent fevers, nausea and weight loss. The joints and muscles may ache. The skin is photosensitive. There may be abnormalities of the blood vessels that cause trouble with the heart, kidneys, intestinal and nervous systems.

The disease is fatal about 20 percent of the time but the disease process is slow, over many years. The most severe trouble causing death is kidney failure and infections. The treatment may contribute to the development of infections however. Steroids are used to slow down the immune system dysfunction but will also result in a higher chance of infection. Both the disease and the treatment adversely effect the immune system.

We do not know what causes the disease and unfortunately there is no cure. Most of the treatment is just to try and control the disease process, minimize it. SLE may also be a minimal process that requires minimal medications for treatment. In all cases wound healing is a problem. The same is true for other related diseases as scleroderma, polymyositis and mixed connective tissue disease.

In the wound clinic we see these patients because of non-healing or slow to heal wounds. They may in fact be cancers that appear as wounds. Often antibiotics are needed and sometimes a skin graft may be required. The diseased area may need to be removed.

As always the earlier one comes to the doctor for treatment the better we may be able to minimize the disease process.

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center**

Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

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