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Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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- I. The client/caregiver can define systemic lupus erythematosus (SLP).**
- A. With SLP the body's immune system does not function as it should. It produces antibodies that fight against the body's healthy cells and tissue.
 - B. It is a chronic disorder with exacerbations and remissions.
 - C. It is an inflammatory disorder that causes structural changes in connective tissue affecting the skin, joints, muscles, and other organs.
 - D. Symptoms may range from mild to severe.
 - E. Symptoms may vary during the course of the disease.
- II. The client/caregiver can list signs and symptoms.**
- A. Painful or swollen joints and muscle pain
 - B. Unexplained fever
 - C. Red rashes, most commonly on the face (butterfly rash over nose and cheeks)
 - D. Chest pain upon deep breathing
 - E. Unusual loss of hair
 - F. Pale or purple fingers or toes from cold or stress
 - G. Sensitivity to the sun
 - H. Swelling in legs/ankles or around eyes
 - I. Mouth ulcers
 - J. Swollen glands
 - K. Extreme fatigue
 - L. Headache
- III. The client/caregiver can list body systems that can be affected by lupus.**
- A. Kidneys—inflammation and renal disease
 - B. Lungs—pleuritis and pneumonia
 - C. Central nervous system—dizziness, vision problems, memory and personality changes, seizure, or stroke

NRS
DATE INITIAL

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- D. Blood vessels—mild to severe vasculitis
 - E. Blood—anemia, leukopenia (decreased white blood cells), or increased risk for blood clots
 - F. Heart—inflammation of heart and surrounding membrane or increased risk for atherosclerosis
- IV. The client/caregiver can list measures to manage this disease.**
- A. Take medications as ordered.
 - B. Be alert to specific medication treatments. Have education about the use of corticosteroids, and follow physician instructions for dosage and discontinuation.
 - C. Plan regular exercise and rest. Pace activities to allow for rest.
 - D. Avoid sunlight or ultraviolet radiation. Never use tanning booths. When outdoors use sunscreen and wear clothing to protect arms, legs, and face.
 - E. Eat a diet high in protein, vitamins, and iron to prevent anemia.
 - F. Maintain adequate fluid intake.
 - G. Avoid crowds or people with known infections.
 - H. Provide meticulous mouth care.
 - I. Apply hot packs or cold packs to lessen pain and stiffness.
 - J. Bathe in cool water to decrease itchiness and rash.
 - K. Keep follow-up appointments with physician. Report any signs of flare-up promptly.
 - L. Wear a Medic Alert bracelet.
 - M. Use any adaptive equipment to maintain activity of daily living, such as cooking or dressing.
 - N. For fever over 100 degrees, call your doctor.

(Continued)

RESOURCES

Local lupus support groups

S.L.E. Lupus Foundation
www.lupusny.org/

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin
Diseases Information Clearinghouse NIAMS/National
Institutes of Health
www.niams.nih.gov/

American College of Rheumatology/Association of
Rheumatology Health Professionals
www.rheumatology.org

Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org

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