Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

Lupus is a chronic inflammatory autoimmune disease that can affect many parts of the body, including the skin, joints, kidneys, blood cells, heart and lungs. Episodes of lupus tend to come and go throughout a person's life, and the condition may cause periods of tiredness and pain.

Lupus is an auto-immune illness, which means that instead of the person's immune system producing antibodies to fight and destroy disease-causing bacteria or viruses, it mistakenly attacks their perfectly healthy body tissues. Lupus can be mild or life-threatening depending on which tissues are affected.

Lupus occurs in several types, including systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), discoid and drug-induced. SLE is the most common type and causes the most difficulties. It can lead to problems such as fever, swollen joints, anaemia and kidney failure. Lupus is most commonly diagnosed when people are between 15 and 45 years old. The cause is unknown.