



LUPUS RESEARCH

WITH PROFESSOR GEORGE C. TSOKOS

Talking points

KNOWLEDGE

1. How did lupus get its name?
2. What should a healthy T cell do when it encounters a virus in the body?

COMPREHENSION

3. How would you define an autoimmune disease?
4. What role does the CREM gene play in the development of lupus?
5. After examining tissues from patients with lupus, why does George then conduct experiments on mice?

APPLICATION

6. Which professions will be involved in future lupus research? How will each contribute to our understanding and treatment of lupus?
7. If you met someone with lupus, should you wear a face mask to protect yourself from the disease? Why, or why not?

ANALYSIS

8. Why do you think most deaths of patients with lupus are due to infections, rather than lupus itself?
9. Why do you think it is sometimes hard for doctors to diagnose that a patient has lupus?

EVALUATION

10. Do you think gene editing sounds like a good approach to treating lupus? Why, or why not?
11. Which aspect of lupus research or patient care most appeals to you, and why?

Activity

Draw a **cartoon strip** to educate 11-to-14-year-old students about lupus. Consider the following:

- Your cartoon should be eye-catching and engaging for the target audience.
- How will you portray a healthy immune system and the concept of autoimmunity? The article compares them to castle guards – what other analogies could you use?
- How will you communicate the complex mechanisms behind lupus (e.g., T cells, the CREM gene, IL-2 and IL-17 proteins) with clear and simple language and images?

More resources

The following organisations provide a wealth of information about lupus:

- The Lupus Foundation of America: www.lupus.org
- Lupus UK: www.lupusuk.org.uk
- The Lupus Research Alliance: www.lupusresearch.org