



Support Funding for Lupus Research at the National Institutes of Health

Request

The Lupus Foundation of America respectfully requests Congress **provide \$32 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support and bolster basic, clinical, and translational research across the country.** The enhanced focus and additional resources for NIH will help make much-needed gains in understanding the causes of lupus and, ultimately, a discovery of safer, more tolerable and effective FDA-approved treatments for the disease.

Rationale

Lupus is one of the most mysterious and debilitating diseases known to medicine—difficult to define, hard to understand, and a challenge to live with and treat. Lupus annually costs the nation an estimated \$31.4 billion in direct and indirect expenditures. The estimated average annual cost per person with lupus (between the ages of 18 and 65) is \$20,924, and the annual cost for an individual with lupus kidney disease (lupus nephritis) could be as high as \$62,651. Sufficient funding for the NIH can lead to better research into finding the causes of lupus and the discovery of safe, tolerable, and effective lupus treatments, helping to address this burden of illness.

Lupus at the NIH

Federal investment in biomedical research at the NIH benefits people with lupus every day. In FY 2013, 14 different Institutes funded lupus research demonstrating the broad reaching scope of the disease and the need for lupus research that cuts across multiple disciplines and scientific arenas. With the significant impact lupus has on virtually any organ system in the body, people with lupus and the researchers and clinicians working diligently to help them urgently need the NIH and Congress to provide sufficient funding to bolster research at all Institutes.

About Lupus

Lupus is an unpredictable and misunderstood autoimmune disease that ravages different parts of the body. It is difficult to diagnose, hard to live with, and a challenge to treat. In lupus, the body's immune system becomes unbalanced, causing inflammation and tissue damage to virtually any organ system in the body including the skin, joints, heart, lungs, kidney, and brain. The symptoms and impact of lupus range in severity from mild to life-threatening. An estimated 1.5 million Americans have a form of lupus. Ninety percent of the people with lupus are women. African American, Hispanics and Latinos, Asians and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans are two to three times more likely to develop lupus - a health disparity that remains unexplained.