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For Immediate Release

GOVERNOR WHITMER PROCLAIMS MAY AS LUPUS AWARENESS MONTH IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

(Michigan – May 3, 2024) – The Michigan Lupus Foundation is pleased to announce Governor Gretchen Whitmer officially proclaimed May as Lupus Awareness Month in the state of Michigan. Proclamations are provided by the Governor's Office as a service to Michigan citizens to increase awareness of significant issues in the state. The Michigan Lupus Foundation is celebrating Lupus Awareness Month during the month of May in the United States, an entire month dedicated to raising awareness for this incurable, debilitating chronic illness. It is estimated around 14,000 Michiganders suffer from lupus and between 322,000 to 1 million people in the United States have been diagnosed with a form of lupus. Spreading awareness provides support, resources and advocacy for people fighting the disease.

“Lupus Awareness Month is a time to put a spotlight on what it’s like to live with a chronic illness and raise awareness, provide support, advocate for change and research for a cure,” Executive Director Kimberly Dimond said. “We’re working hard to improve the quality of life for those of us living with lupus, develop better treatment options and improve understanding of the disease. We thank Governor Whitmer for this important recognition.”

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack its own healthy tissues and organs. It can affect any part of the body causing widespread pain and inflammation. People with lupus often suffer from joint pain, extreme fatigue and organ damage. Diagnosing lupus can take 2-6 years on average per patient since it can often mimic other diseases and there is not one conclusive test. Fundraising for lupus is necessary to drive research initiatives and provide support and services to those who need it. The MI Lupus Foundation provides resources for patients, caregivers and healthcare providers. The foundation also advocates with lawmakers to improve the patient experience with insurance, medications, and disability rights.

Michiganders are encouraged to help raise awareness during the month of May in the following ways:

- Support upcoming [special events](#).
- Wear purple and tag the Michigan Lupus Foundation on social media, especially World Lupus Day on May 10th. Use hashtags #WorldLupusDay and #MILupus.
- Contact local newspaper and media stations to share your story.
- Help advocate for a meaningful change.

- Share information about lupus on social media, in your community and with family and friends. Download the [Lupus Awareness Month toolkit](#) to make digital sharing easy.

About Lupus

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack its own healthy tissues and organs. It can affect any part of the body causing widespread pain and inflammation. Common symptoms include crippling fatigue, fever and joint pain. Lupus affects each person differently and may go into periods of flares and remissions. Diagnosing lupus can take 2-6 years on average per patient since it can often mimic other diseases and there is not one conclusive test. More people have lupus than cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, sickle-cell anemia, and cystic fibrosis combined. It is estimated that between 322,000 and 1.5 million people in the United States have been diagnosed with this disease. Lupus primarily affects young women between the ages of 15-45 years old and occurs more frequently in women of African American, Hispanic, or Asian descent. There is currently no cure for lupus.

About the MI Lupus Foundation

The MI Lupus Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that exists to improve the quality of life for those living with lupus through support, education and research with the goal of finding a cure. The foundation provides financial and informational resources for patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers. The Michigan Lupus Foundation has been continually serving Michigan since 1974 and is working to build a brighter future for all lupus patients and their families. For more information, visit <http://milupus.org>.

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