

## 21. Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize shared mechanisms used by autoimmune (pathogenic) and physiologic host defense mechanisms
2. Appreciate how B cells and T cells participate in different stages of SLE disease.
3. Become familiar with the concept of 'epitope spreading'.
4. Recognize the role of HLA haplotype and complement components in disease susceptibility.
5. Understand the rationale for the 1997 'classification criteria' for SLE.
6. Appreciate the different organ systems that can be targeted in SLE.

### SUMMARY:

1. Systemic lupus is a systemic autoimmune syndrome with pleiotropic organ involvement.
2. The initial presentation may be highly variable and the disease can progress in unpredictable ways.
3. Genetic susceptibility provides clues to pathogenesis and marks different clinical subsets.
4. Other diseases (infectious, malignant, or other) may mimic SLE manifestations.
5. Treatment is tailored to the most severely involved and most critical organ.