

LUPUS now® RESEARCH UPDATE

An eNewsletter from the Lupus Foundation of America, Inc.

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The **Lupus Now® Research Update**, a free eNewsletter from the Lupus Foundation of America, provides reviews of recently published papers from significant medical journals translated into understandable language, information about advances in lupus research and clinical studies, and other relevant news for individuals with an interest in lupus. The commentary aims to put research findings into perspective, explain the limits to the conclusions that can be drawn, and examine the possibilities for future research directions. This is an exciting time in lupus research, so it is important for everyone in the lupus community to be fully informed about ongoing studies and developments and what they might mean.

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Low bone density in African American women with lupus

From *Arthritis & Rheumatism*, May 2007

Women with lupus are at risk for osteoporosis and fractures. It is estimated that as many as 25% of pre-menopausal women with lupus may have osteopenia, or low bone mineral density (BMD), an early sign of osteoporosis. The researchers wanted to determine if African American women with lupus, like their Caucasian counterparts, were at risk for low bone density. In this study of 298 women, the researchers found that African American women were much more likely to have low BMD in the lower back (or lumbar spine) than Caucasian women. [Read more >](#)

At risk for thrombosis: FXII autoantibodies and the antiphospholipid syndrome

From the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, April 2007

People with lupus who have antiphospholipid antibodies (aPL) are at risk for blood clots, including heart attacks, strokes, clots in the legs, lungs, or other organs, and pregnancy complications. Researchers for this study of 127 patients found antibodies to Factor XII (FXII), a protein that plays a role in preventing blood clots, were present in 40% of the lupus patients as opposed to only 7% of the healthy people. [Read more >](#)

Anti-Sm antibodies and lupus disease activity may be important in predicting outcomes

From *Lupus*, March 2007

It is still not possible to predict in advance who will develop lupus and, what course each patient's disease may take. The researchers hoped to sort through several of the probable contributing factors that could help predict the progression and severity of disease activity among lupus patients. Researchers in Canada studied the records of 330 patients from three different racial and ethnic groups who were diagnosed with lupus in Manitoba, Canada, over a period spanning more than 20 years and noted a number of differences among the three ethnic groups. [Read more >](#)

Lupus and HPV

From *Arthritis & Rheumatism*. May 2007

Previous studies have suggested that women with lupus may not be able to produce an effective immune response to HPV. Researchers wanted to determine whether lupus patients are at enhanced risk of HPV infections. In this study of 112 women, researchers found that the women with lupus had a very high rate of infection with a particular sub-type of HPV-16, and those lupus patients who had large amounts of this virus had a higher rate of abnormal cervical smears. [Read more >](#)



Novel antibodies as markers for lupus activity in the nervous system

From the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, April 2007

Diagnosing lupus can be difficult because the symptoms are sometimes similar to those of other conditions. Researchers hoped to learn if antineuronal antibodies (anti-Ns) could be used to diagnose central nervous system involvement in lupus (NPSLE). After looking at blood samples from 198 people, patients who had been diagnosed with lupus had higher levels of anti-Ns in their blood samples than was seen in other study participants. [Read more >](#)



LFA responds to the results of study of CellCept for lupus nephritis

From the Lupus Foundation of America

Preliminary data from the 24-week induction phase show that CellCept achieved results that are equivalent to those achieved with intravenous Cyclophosphamide (IVC). [Read more >](#)

A potential therapy for lupus nephritis when other medications fail

From *Arthritis & Rheumatism*, April 2007

Lupus nephritis (kidney disease) is a serious complication of lupus. Researchers in Sweden tested to see if providing rituximab (Rituxan[®]) in combination with cyclophosphamide (CYC) would be a safe and effective therapy for lupus nephritis patients who had previously not responded to CYC. The researchers found that rituximab, in combination with CYC, was effective in treating lupus nephritis in patients who had previously not responded to CYC. [Read more >](#)

Results of a preliminary study of rituximab for difficult NPSLE

From the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, April 2007

Lupus may affect the central nervous system (NPSLE), with estimates varying widely (from 12 to 75%) for the number of lupus patients who experience minor or moderate flares in the nervous system. Researchers from Japan found that the cancer drug rituximab was effective in treating the NPSLE symptoms in a small group of 10 patients. [Read more >](#)



LFA awards five summer fellowships to student researchers

The LFA has awarded the five summer fellowships as part of the LFA's ongoing efforts to stimulate increased research on lupus. The five researchers are conducting their studies under the supervision of an established lupus investigator. [Read more >](#)

Call for nominations - Evelyn V. Hess Research Award

The Evelyn V. Hess Award is given annually to a clinical or basic researcher whose body of work has advanced understanding of the pathophysiology, etiology, epidemiology, diagnosis, or treatment of lupus. Nominations are due by September 14. [Read more >](#)

Bikers crisscross the United States for lupus

Recent college graduates James Mason and Dylan Trakas and Australian Geoff Thomas have been spending the summer months riding bicycles across the US to raise awareness of lupus and money for research. Read about their journeys and make a donation to show your support of their efforts. [Across the lupUS](#) and [BikeUSA2007](#)

Write to your U.S. Representative

Urge your Representative to sign on as a co-sponsor of the **Lupus REACH Amendments Act**. [Contact Congress Now!](#)



Lupus Now: State of the Art Approaches from the Experts

The LFA is offering a free public education program, "Lupus Now: State-of-the-Art Approaches From the Expert" in four U.S cities in the coming months: Denver, Las Vegas, New York and Boston.

[Read more >](#)

Next Live Lupus Chat

The next live chat on the LFA Website will be September 12 on the topic of lupus clinical trials.

[Read more >](#)

Links of interest

[What's in the current issue of Lupus Now magazine](#)

[Clinical studies seeking patients](#)

[Transcripts from previous live chats](#)

[Approved publications](#)

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[Main Lupus Foundation of America Website](#)



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