



DISCOVERY

Transforming lives through innovation.



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LRI Research Hits the Bullseye - Finds Target That Causes Bleeding Complication of Lupus

[Newly published research](#) funded by the LRI has identified the exact cell that autoantibodies target to cause dangerous blood clots in people with lupus.

Led by Dr. Bruce Furie of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School, the findings provide insight on how researchers can develop safer and more specific treatments to stop clotting in lupus. In addition, the findings may be applicable to anyone who suffers from the autoimmune clotting disorder known as antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) – with or without lupus.



Why does clotting go awry?

Platelets are blood cells that are the first responders to an injury. When someone gets a cut, platelets arrive at the scene and help form a clot to stop the bleeding.

A person with lupus is at risk for antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) -- a potentially life-threatening complication where the body makes antibodies that interact with blood cells to trigger blood clots when there is no injury. These clots can cause strokes, heart attacks and other dangerous conditions. APS also has a significant impact on the health and safety of pregnant women because these antibodies can cause miscarriages and pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure during pregnancy).

Hitting the Bullseye

Previous research identified autoantibodies that attach to a protein called beta2-glycoprotein-1 as a biomarker for predicting and monitoring APS. Dr. Furie used cutting-edge imaging techniques in live mice to show the exact cell the antibodies interfere with to trigger blood clotting.

Forging Ahead

Treatment options for people with lupus and APS are limited. If we can understand the pathway by which APS antibodies cause harm, therapies can be developed to block these mechanisms. The ultimate goal is an oral medication that prevents these deadly blood clots.

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About the Lupus Research Institute

The world's leading private supporter of innovative research in lupus, the LRI champions scientific risk-taking in the hunt for solutions to this complex and dangerous autoimmune disease.

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