

# AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE RESEARCH

Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason (BRI) is an independent, nonprofit leader in autoimmune disease research and one of the few institutes in the world devoted to finding causes and cures for these diseases.

## WHAT IS AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE?

There are more than 80 autoimmune diseases and they all have a common cause: the immune system, which protects the body against infection, makes a mistake and attacks healthy tissue.

Autoimmune diseases are chronic and debilitating; they have no cure and can lead to high medical costs and reduced quality of life. These diseases are a leading cause of death and disability among women and children; their incidence and impact are growing.

## HOW COMMON ARE AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES?

**23M**

23 million Americans are living with autoimmune disease.

That's one in 15.

**4x**

Four times more women than men are affected by autoimmune disease.

## Autoimmune diseases can affect any part of the body



Type 1 diabetes and thyroid disease  
Endocrine system



Rheumatoid arthritis, lupus  
Muscle & joints



Crohn's and celiac diseases  
Gut



Multiple sclerosis  
Nervous system



Psoriasis, scleroderma  
Skin



Uveitis  
Eyes



Kidney and bladder disease



Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis  
Lung



Blood disorders

## WHO GETS AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES?

Certain factors put people at greater risk:

- Family history of autoimmune disease
- Exposure to environmental and lifestyle factors—sunlight, chemicals, infections, smoking and diet
- Women of childbearing age
- People with Down syndrome
- Northern European heritage (type 1 diabetes)
- African-American and Hispanic heritage (lupus)
- Living in the Pacific Northwest (greater prevalence of MS, inflammatory bowel disease and type 1 diabetes)

## HOW IS BRI ADDRESSING AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE?

We are committed to a deeper understanding of the immune system in both health and disease. We work across diseases, because we believe progress against one is progress against them all. Our goal is to predict, prevent, reverse and ultimately cure these diseases.

## FROM LAB TO CLINIC — CONNECTING OUR RESEARCH

We integrate three types of medical research, working from the lab to the clinic—then back to the lab. This unique approach enables investigators across institutions to collaborate to improve and save lives.

### Lab Research

Scientists investigate the immune response to better understand disease cause and progression.

### Translational Research

Through use of biorepositories, lab discoveries are linked to explore their potential for clinical applications to improve the lives of patients.

### Clinical Research

Volunteers participate in hundreds of clinical studies to improve future treatment options.

# JOIN US

## Get More Information

Visit [BenaroyaResearch.org](http://BenaroyaResearch.org) and sign up to receive research updates.

Follow stories on the Autoimmune Life blog at [BenaroyaResearch.org/blog](http://BenaroyaResearch.org/blog)

## Follow us



## Partner in Discovery

We need volunteer donors with and without disease.

BRI researchers work with hundreds of physicians and patients through biorepositories and clinical trials—all focused on improving human health.

Register to donate to a biorepository at [BenaroyaResearch.org/bio](http://BenaroyaResearch.org/bio)

## Donate

To support lifesaving medical research visit: [BenaroyaResearch.org/donate-now](http://BenaroyaResearch.org/donate-now)

