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|  | **Abstract** **Abstract:** The title of my project is "What factors contribute to the cause and diagnosis of Lupus? The goal of my project was to examine certain factors such as specific mannerisms, diet, family history, or environmental factors that could possibly be linked to the disease. In order to do this, I complied a survey with eighteen questions on it. I contacted several Lupus organizations such as Kate Percell at Kate@medakate.org and the Lupus Foundation of America at lupusshou@hern.org and explained my experiment to them. The organizations then agreed to distribute the survey by e-mail to all of the Lupus patients in that are members of their support groups. Within days, many people started responding to the surveys and I received a total of sixty-seven fully completed surveys that I was able to use in compiling the results of my survey. To use as a control, I then surveyed fifty people without Lupus in my school, church, and neighborhood to compare the results to. After researching the disease and from my own experience with it, I chose some factors to examine. I personally was diagnosed with Rhenaud�s Phenomenon and a high count of ANA in my blood so this actually helped me to pick specific factors to examine. The ones that I was most interested in were the use of aspartine, family history, sun exposure, and eating disorders because I myself have experienced all of these which makes it a possibility that they could be linked to the disease. The results of my survey were astonishing. My hypothesis about a correlation between the use of asparine and Lupus seems to have been proven true as 88% of those surveyed used aspartine, most of them very heavily. For family history, 69% did have family history of Lupus or other auto-immune diseases. Looking at sun exposure, I suspected Lupus patients to have had heavy exposure to the sun which was proven true as 54% had heavy exposure, 31% had medium exposure, and only 15% had mild exposure while 0% had no exposure to the sun. I asked patients if they had taken vitamins before their diagnosis and this showed no correlation as 49% did and 51% did not. Before I had problems with my ANA, I had a battle with anorexia so this made me wonder if my anorexia could have contributed to my high ANA but the survey showed no statistical evidence of this as only 7% of patients have ever experienced an eating disorder. When asked if patients were smokers, 42% had at some time been smokers and 48% had not so this does not show a strong statistical link between smoking and Lupus. When asked about exercise, 27% never did, 31% did rarely, 33% did moderately, and 9% did often. This is probably due the fact that Lupus patients are often unable to exercise due to joint problems during flares.  Research show that Lupus is most prevalent among Black Females, but the survey only showed a part of this to be true. Only 1% of the patients were male, which supports the research, but only 4% were black, while 85% were White, 6.5% were Indian, 1.5% were Asian, 1.5% were Hispanic, and 1.5% were other. So in conclusion, the factors that had the strongest statistical correlation to Lupus patients were gender, the use of aspartine, sun exposure, race, and family history. I suspect the results of the survey could show some error due to free response biased, especially in the areas of gender and race because females and whites are probably more likely to respond to the survey then others. | |
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