



Overview of Autoimmune Diseases

Your immune system is the network of cells and tissues in your body that work together to defend you from viruses, bacteria, and infection. It tries to identify and destroy the invaders that might hurt you.

In autoimmune diseases, proteins known as autoantibodies target the body's own healthy tissues by mistake, signaling the body to attack them.

Types of Autoimmune Diseases

There are several types of autoimmune diseases. These include the following.

- [Alopecia areata](#) happens when the immune system attacks hair follicles and causes hair loss.
- [Pemphigus](#) causes blistering of the skin and the inside of the mouth, nose, throat, eyes, and genitals.
- [Psoriasis](#) happens when skin cells multiply too quickly, causing scaly and inflamed skin.
- [Rheumatoid arthritis](#) is a type of arthritis that affects the lining of the joints and may cause medical problems outside of the joints.
- [Scleroderma](#) leads to patches of tight, hard skin, and inflammation in other areas of the body.
- [Sjogren's syndrome](#) happens when the immune system attacks the glands that make moisture in the eyes, mouth, and other parts of the body.
- [Systemic lupus erythematosus](#) can affect many parts of the body, including the skin, joints, heart, lungs, kidneys, circulating blood cells, and brain.
- [Vitiligo](#) happens when skin cells that make pigment are destroyed causing patches of skin to lose pigment or color.