

Scientists announce advance in understanding body's natural defenses

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Medical Research Council (MRC) scientists at the University of Leicester have made a new advance in understanding how the body fights certain types of cancer and other disease such as Lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

Their findings have been published in the journal *Nature Immunology*. The work has been carried out by a team at the MRC Toxicology Unit at the University of Leicester.

Dr Melania Capasso, one of the authors of the study, described the findings as being 'very significant'.

"We showed that a newly discovered protein, HVCN1, regulates antibody production through modulation of intracellular oxidation. In the absence of HVCN1, the immune response is blunted. These findings are very novel and significantly contribute to our understanding of how the organism mounts an [immune response](#).

"The findings are very significant for the immunology field and help elucidate the contribution of natural oxidants such as reactive oxygen species to B cell activation and represent the rationale for using HVCN1 as a target for therapies where activation of B cell needs to be diminished."

Dr Capasso said the findings could be useful for the treatment of some types of B cell lymphoma and the treatment of [autoimmune diseases](#)

such as [Lupus](#) (and [rheumatoid arthritis](#)).

More information: <http://www.nature.com/ni/index.html>

Provided by University of Leicester

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