

# Low vitamin D levels linked to lupus

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Monash-led research has shown for the first time that low vitamin D levels are associated with higher disease activity in Australian lupus patients.

Published earlier this month in *Lupus Science & Medicine*, lead researcher Dr Kristy Yap, from the Centre for Inflammatory Diseases in the School of Clinical Sciences reported her findings in the first study to examine systematic lupus erythematosus (SLE) disease in the Southern Hemisphere.

SLE, also known as lupus, is a severe, incurable and debilitating multisystem autoimmune disease. It is the most common autoimmune disease, affecting at least five million people worldwide, and is predominantly diagnosed in young women.

The longitudinal study examined the [disease activity](#) and [vitamin D](#) levels of [lupus patients](#) who attended the Monash Medical Centre Lupus Clinic between 2007 and 2013.

"We found a high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in our cohort," said Dr Yap.

"Significantly, over a quarter of our patients recorded low vitamin D levels, keeping with reports from other parts of the world, including Asia and Europe."

Demonstrating an inverse association between vitamin D levels and lupus

disease activity, the research shows that increasing vitamin D [levels](#) correlates with lower disease activity in lupus patients.

Dr Alberta Hoi, Head of the Monash Lupus Clinic and chief investigator in the Lupus and Arthritis Research Group, said future studies should include randomised trials which focus on the clinical effect of vitamin D supplementation in [lupus](#).

**More information:** "Association of low vitamin D with high disease activity in an Australian systemic lupus erythematosus cohort." *Lupus Sci Med* 2015;2:e000064 [DOI: 10.1136/lupus-2014-000064](https://doi.org/10.1136/lupus-2014-000064)

Provided by Monash University

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