

# Communication and coordination of care are important for ensuring lupus patients' health

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Results from a recent study suggest that improved communication and coordination of care between patients, physicians, and health insurers can provide important health benefits for patients with lupus.

Using information from annual surveys of 566 participants in the Lupus Outcomes Study, investigators found that patients who rated their physicians poorly in patient-provider communication experienced a significantly greater accrual of damage to various body tissues. Patients rating their health plan poorly on care coordination also experienced a significantly greater accrual of disease damage.

"We know that technical quality of care—or how well providers follow evidence-based recommendations—affects outcomes in patients with lupus. In a prior study we showed that how well patients rate interactions with providers and health systems affects their technical quality of care. In this study, we go the last step and show that poorly-rated interactions between patients and providers and [health systems](#) at one point can lead to higher levels of disease damage later," said Dr. Edward Yelin, lead author of the *Arthritis Care & Research* study, which was funded by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases.

"This shows that interacting well with patients, such as communicating in ways they can understand and helping to make sure they can navigate the [health](#) care system, is part of good care for lupus [patients](#), just as selecting the right treatments is."

**More information:** Edward Yelin et al. Relationship between Process

of Care and Subsequent Increase in Damage in SLE, *Arthritis Care & Research* (2016). [DOI: 10.1002/acr.22977](https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.22977)

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