

## NM Scientists Discover the Driver of Lupus

Lupus, a chronic autoimmune disease that causes inflammation and pain in your body, affects more than 1.5 million people in the United States.

With lupus, your immune system, which is meant to fight infections, attacks its own healthy cells and tissues.

Scientists at Northwestern Medicine have discovered an imbalance of a molecule in the blood that drives the harmful immune response in lupus. Restoring balance of this molecule in the blood may potentially cure the disease.

Until this study, the causes of lupus were unclear. The disease can cause life-threatening damage to your skin and joints as well as internal organs like your kidneys and heart. Existing treatments, which typically involve medication that stops your immune system from functioning (immunosuppression), can fail to control the disease and have an unintended side effect — reduction in the immune system's ability to fight infections.

Learn more about how the scientists' discovery could be the key to curing lupus on [HealthBeat](#).

## Take Care Tips

### How Much Protein Do You Really Need?

Protein is essential for building muscle, staying full and maintaining your overall health. But how much do you really need? According to Northwestern Medicine Dietitian Bethany Doerfler, RD, many variables influence your protein needs, including how efficiently your body uses it.

To understand your daily protein needs, read more on [HealthBeat](#).



## Volunteer Spotlight: Susan Naser

Domestic Violence Advocate Volunteer,  
Palos Hospital

### What Has Your Volunteer Experience Taught You?

I've learned to be more patient and see and understand life from other people's perspectives and cultures.

### How Has Your Volunteer Experience Impacted You Personally?

Volunteering impacted me in a way to be more empathetic, not to take anything for granted and that we have so much to be grateful for.

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*Encourage your friends and family to join our volunteer team. They can learn more at [nm.org/volunteer](https://nm.org/volunteer).*

## By the Numbers

### 7 NM Hospitals Receive an 'A' in Fall 2024 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade

- Central DuPage Hospital
- Delnor Hospital
- Huntley Hospital
- Kishwaukee Hospital
- Lake Forest Hospital
- McHenry Hospital
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital

The score is published in the spring and fall by Leapfrog, an organization that rates hospitals on a number of measures, including self-reported safety practices, patient experience, hospital-acquired infections and other quality and safety measures. [Learn more.](#)



Nancy  
Glick



Mark  
Oefelein

## 2024 Volunteer Excellence Award Winners

The Volunteer Excellence Award recognizes two volunteers for their passion for service and significant support of patients, visitors and staff. Volunteers are nominated by staff members for demonstrating commitment, exhibiting kindness and serving as a positive influence.

### Nancy Glick

Nancy Glick joined the Northwestern Memorial Hospital volunteer team in 2000 and has volunteered over 10,000 hours of time, specifically serving in Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute.

Glick's roles include greeting patients and visitors in the lobby and guiding them to their destination. She is known to go out of her way to show kindness to patients and staff members. Glick will sometimes provide lunch for staff members, offer a listening ear or pick up extra volunteer hours over personal commitments.

"Her unwavering commitment to patient-centered care, fostering relationships with staff and giving back to the community is truly remarkable," says Avery Spitz, practice manager, Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute, Central Services.

Glick's knowledge and experience volunteering with Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute is highly valued, and she is actively engaged with leadership.

"Her infectious positive attitude is a breath of fresh air, creating a welcoming and uplifting environment for everyone," says Spitz. "Nancy's contributions have made a lasting impact on our organization."

### Mark Oefelein

Mark Oefelein is no stranger to the hundreds of patients that come into the Huntley ED every day. A handful of staff members shared nominations revealing his commitment to always go above and beyond when the pace of the ED is high.

Oefelein helps show people where to go, assists Environmental Services staff with cleaning stretchers and rooms, and never misses a call light when nurses need extra support. He also mentors new volunteers, showing them how to maintain the success of the unit.

"Mark's kindness is exhibited in his interactions with patients, visitors and staff," says Jennifer Dysart, RN. "Nothing ever seems to be an inconvenience for him, as he makes you feel like you're doing him a favor by letting him take on a task."

"Mark will brighten your day from the moment you see him. When you see him in his purple vest, he's got a smile on and is ready to spring into action," says Samantha Schweitzer, patient transporter, Central Transport, Huntley.