

Meenakshi Jolly, MD, MS

The George W. Stuppy, MD, Professor of Arthritis

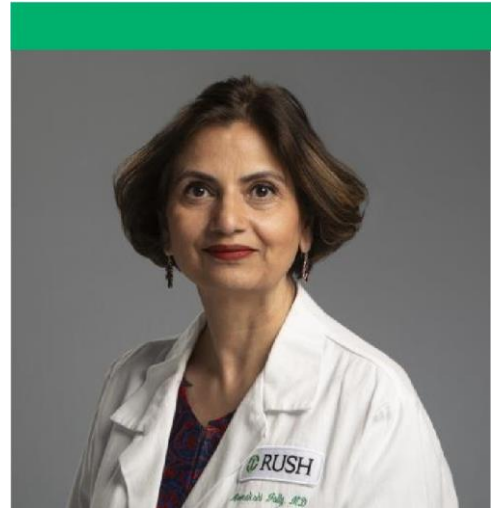
Advancement of Medicine

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that predominantly affects young women. It is more common among people of color and is associated with worse health outcomes. This autoimmune disease impairs multiple dimensions daily quality of life for patients and their loved ones. Pain, fatigue and psychosocial impacts are the most common unmet needs reported by patients.

We established the Rush Lupus Clinic in 2006, and I serve as its founding director. The clinic provides patients with comprehensive, leading-edge care and serves as a platform for education and research in lupus for patients, their caregivers and medical trainees.

Our research focuses on health outcomes in patients with rheumatologic conditions such as lupus, with an emphasis on patient-reported outcomes. We utilize the biopsychosocial model for health to better understand the disease and patients' roles in health outcomes. Our goal is to identify and increase our understanding of modifiable factors that may be used to optimize health outcomes for patients with lupus. At Rush University, we have developed patient-reported survey tools, including LupusPRO and the Lupus Impact Tracker. We use these to provide patient care and educate patients and health care personnel. The tools are being used worldwide in research, both investigator-initiated and pharmacologic. Medical trainees and fellows gain valuable experience learning and providing expert care in the Rush Lupus Clinic and conducting scholarly work. We have an in-house LEARN at Rush lupus support group and also conduct an annual lupus educational conference for patients with lupus and their families.

The Stuppy Professorship has enabled me to dedicate time and effort to scholarly work, collaborations, and educational and community-based activities.





Leadership Highlights, Education, Mentoring and Research

Some of the highlights and activities that I was proud to be a part of this year include:

- I was awarded the Teaching and Service Award for my contributions as an associate program director for the Rheumatology Fellowship Program from 2008 to 2025. The incoming team of program director, associate program director and core faculty have been my mentees in the past.
- I served on the expert advisory panel for patient-reported outcomes by the Lupus Accelerating Breakthroughs Consortium, or Lupus ABC, through the Lupus Research Alliance. This effort aims to guide the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, pharmaceutical companies and scholarly researchers in this field in identifying which patient-reported outcome tools to integrate into future clinical trials.
- I served on the expert advisory panel for the Lupus Research Alliance's lupus clinical trials.
- I was part of the annual survey working group for the Lupus Research Alliance's affiliate Lupus Therapeutics.
- I served as site principal investigator for the Lupus Clinical Trials Network and am the principal investigator on several lupus-related trials.
- I was an editorial board member of the peer-reviewed journal *Lupus* and continue to review for other leading rheumatology journals.
- I served as a senior mentor for our rheumatology fellow on his scholarly research work focusing on health outcomes in lupus. We have met three times, and he has done his proposal presentation at the rheumatology research grand rounds.
- I mentored Ailda Nika, MD, as part of the Women Mentor Mentee Program, with a focus on the conduct of clinical trials in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, or SLE.

Speaking Engagements

I was invited to lecture as an expert on lupus at conferences and universities, including the following:

- "Demystifying Pain in Lupus," State of the Art Clinical Symposium, American College of Rheumatology, Chicago. April 4, 2025
- "Updates on Lupus," American College of Rheumatology Convergence 2025, Chicago. Learning from

the Experts: FIT Session-Roundtables. Oct 24, 2025

- Moderate SLE abstract session at the American College of Rheumatology Convergence 2025, on Diagnosis, Manifestations & Outcomes II: Morbidity & Mortality. Oct 28, 2025
- “Time to ImPROvise.” Rush Rheumatology Research Grand Rounds. Sept 4, 2025
- “Where I Have Been and Where Am I Going.” Indiana University School of Medicine Grand Rounds. 07/21/2025

Publication Highlights

- Katz P, Askanase AD, Baruah N, Chen WH, Fisch A, Garrard L, Jolly M, Vargas Lupo V, Mills J, Papadopoulos E, Park J, Touma Z, Cooper N, Menezes C, Staeva TP, Nguyen H, Coney C, Cox J, Eberspecher C, Gabriel S, Lerner S, Logan M, Reyna E, Santa Cruz E, Ung B, Yun N; Lupus Voices Council of Lupus ABC. New efforts to incorporate patient-reported outcomes into lupus clinical trials: report of the community meeting convened by the Lupus ABC, 16-17 October 2024. *Lupus Sci Med*. 2025 Dec 4;12(2):e001876. doi: 10.1136/lupus-2025-001876. PMID: 41344914; PMCID: PMC12699555.
- Pękala A, Jolly M, Fronczyk K, Czuszyńska Z, Sierakowska M, Szmyrka-Kaczmarek M, Olesińska M. The Polish validation of a disease-specific patient-reported outcome measure of systemic lupus erythematosus. *Lupus*. 2026 Jan;35(1):57-64. doi: 10.1177/09612033251401647. Epub 2025 Nov 26. PMID: 41297529.
- Rustomji Y, Nweke UC, Hassan S, Ahmad U, Jolly M. Not so patient friendly: Patient education materials in rheumatology and internal medicine fall short of nationally recommended readability benchmarks in the United States. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken)*. 2025 May;77(5):676-684. doi: 10.1002/acr.25473. Epub 2025 Jan 11. PMID: 39609043.

Abstracts

- Nagoor Shaik, Ugochukwu C Nweke, Meenakshi Jolly. Evaluating the Readability and Comprehension of Shaik N, Nweke U, Jolly M. Evaluating the readability and comprehension of patient education materials for Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE). Available Online [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol*. 2025; 77 (suppl 9).



- Jolly M. Demystifying pain in patients with lupus: How much is it lupus and how much is it other stuff? [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2025; 77 (suppl 9).
- Eudy A, Clowse M, Jolly M, Burshell D, Pisetsky D, Drake C, Somers T, Snyderman R, Sun K, Sadun R, Criscione-Schreiber L, Maheswaranathan M, Harris N, Doss J, Rogers J. Predicting Type 1 and Type 2 SLE activity using the LupusPRO [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2025; 77 (suppl 9).
- Katz P, Askanase A, Baruah N, Chen W, Cooper N, Fisch A, Garrard L, Jolly M, Vargas Lupo V, Menezes C, Mills J, Nguyen H, Staeva T, Park J, Touma Z. New efforts to incorporate patient-reported outcomes into clinical trials for lupus therapeutics [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2025; 77 (suppl 9).
- Jackson B, Caricchio R, Sheikh S, Jolly M, Meriwether J, Irons T, Adjei T, Donovan C, Menezes C, Canton C, Williams A, Merrell M, Bell S. Innovative clinical trial recruitment approaches in lupus research: LuCIN site perspectives on use of social media and artificial intelligence [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2025; 77 (suppl 9).

Ongoing Clinical Trials

I serve as the site principal investigator for the Lupus Clinical Trials Network and am the principal investigator on several lupus-related trials. We also conduct PI-initiated health outcomes studies. The following research studies are ongoing:

- A 2-Part Seamless Part A (Phase 2)/Part B (Phase 3) Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Multicenter Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of BIIB059 in Participants with Active Subacute Cutaneous Lupus Erythematosus and/or Chronic Cutaneous Lupus Erythematosus with or without Systemic Manifestations and Refractory and/or Intolerant to Antimalarial Therapy (AMETHYST). We signed up with a collaborative effort with dermatology Department on this study, which was their first clinical trial.
- A 5 YR Prospective Observational Registry to Assess Adverse Events of Interest and Effectiveness in Adults with Active Autoantibody-Positive Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Treated with or without Benlysta. We just completed this study after successfully recruiting 27 participants.
- Lupus Data Repository. We have enrolled 527 patients with SLE in this observational study on health outcomes. We have been recently exploring models of pain from this database.



- Study on Health Outcomes in Lupus. We have enrolled 180 patients in this study.

I submitted grant applications to the National Institutes of Health and Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute as the site PI, along with Baylor College of Medicine, Duke University, Vanderbilt University and Tuen Mun Hospital, Hong Kong.

- Multisite Feasibility Trial of WHEEL, or Whole Health for Lupus. NIH submission with Duke University. Site PI M Jolly.
- Lupus Patient Decision-Aid Universal Scale-Up (LUPUS): A Stepped-Wedge Type II Implementation-Effectiveness Trial. PCORI submission with Baylor College of Medicine. Site PI: M Jolly
- Biologics In Active Non-Renal Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (BIAS): A Pragmatic Randomized Trial. PCORI submission with Baylor College of Medicine. Site PI: M Jolly
- Complete Blood Count Components-Based Indices as Biomarkers for Disease Activity in Patients with SLE. PI: M Jolly. Submitted with Vanderbilt University and Tuen Mun Hospital, Hong Kong, to the Lupus Clinical Trials Consortium

The Year Ahead: 2026 and Beyond

Looking ahead, funds from this endowment will continue to support dedicated time and resources toward a prospective lupus registry at Rush to collect data on health outcomes. This will help us understand the burden of the disease, modifiable and non-modifiable variables that influence varied health outcomes in lupus, and the measurement properties of patient-reported tools. The registry will also serve as a basis for collaboration with others and support scholarly work by trainees.

With Gratitude

I am indebted to the family for this endowed chair and your support of clinical, educational and scholarly activities in the field of arthritis (including lupus), with a focus on improving patients' lives.