Building on advancements in the treatment of inflammatory arthritis, the Division of Rheumatology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine not only provides one-of-a-kind clinical practices, but also conducts exciting clinical and translational research and laboratory-based translational studies.

**Rheumatoid Arthritis**

Our physicians are experts and thought leaders in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. In addition, Eric M. Ruderman, MD, established the first joint rheumatology-dermatology psoriatic arthritis clinic in the country at Feinberg in 2002. Our medical school also works closely with the world-class Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC), providing combined services with RIC’s physiatry and physical and occupational therapy programs for patients with limited function or disability resulting from arthritis.

Chronic inflammation and its role in arthritis present multiple avenues for study—from the broad view of the epidemiologist to the microscopic perspective of the basic scientist. Darcy Majka, MD, MS, focuses her research on the epidemiology of rheumatoid arthritis and the relationship between autoimmune rheumatic diseases and cardiovascular disease. Richard M. Pope, MD, is leading research focused on discovering the mechanisms by which immune and inflammatory cells fuel the development of rheumatoid arthritis. Studying inflammation more generally, Christian Stehlik, PhD, and his research team are intent on identifying how inflammatory responses are regulated in order to better understand the events leading to chronic inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. The team, led by Harris Perlman, PhD, is focused on identifying the mechanisms that contribute to the increased occurrence of atherosclerosis in patients with rheumatoid arthritis.

“Driven by our mission to rapidly and efficiently translate novel research discoveries into clinical practice, we have a strong bedside-to-bench-to-bedside approach to all of our programs.”

Richard M. Pope, MD, Mabel Greene Myers Professor of Medicine and Chief, Division of Rheumatology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

With the leadership of renowned lupus expert, Rosalind Ramsey-Goldman, MD, DrPH, the Patient-Oriented Clinical Research Program in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) focuses on improving the quality of life for individuals with lupus by investigating SLE prevention and its related complications.

Dr. Ramsey-Goldman and her team have significantly contributed to the advancement of effective lupus prevention and treatment through several ongoing translational research efforts. The study SOLVABLE (Study of Lupus Vascular and Bone Long-term Endpoints) aims to enhance the tailoring of therapy to prevent complications of vascular injury and tissue damage. The Division of Rheumatology also has initiated clinical trials to analyze the efficacy of a number of drug therapies for lupus.

Scleroderma

Our nationally recognized Northwestern Scleroderma Program, directed by John Varga, MD, delivers advanced multispecialty clinical care combined with cutting-edge research to bring about patient-focused results. To date, we have treated more than 1,000 patients, and our research has resulted in a number of significant innovations. The rapid pace of translating discoveries from the laboratory to the bedside has been a hallmark of the Northwestern Scleroderma Program. For example, the recent multicenter clinical trial of the cancer drug imatinib (Gleevec®) for the prevention and treatment of scleroderma resulted from the groundbreaking studies of the Scleroderma Research Laboratory. At Northwestern, Monique Hinchcliff, MD, is taking the lead in developing personalized medicine approaches for the treatment of scleroderma, focusing on the variability in disease manifestations and treatment responses from one patient to another.

Osteoarthritis

Within the Division of Rheumatology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, investigators have made strides in identifying factors responsible for incident disease, disease progression, and poor functional outcome in people with knee osteoarthritis. Leena Sharma, MD, leads the Feinberg-based Mechanical Factors in Arthritis of the Knee (MAK) study.

Using sophisticated and innovative statistical analytic approaches, the MAK team analyzed data from nearly 2,000 subregions among 177 knees to better understand the sequence of development of bone marrow lesions and focal cartilage defects. Now in its third cycle, Dr. Sharma and her team are building upon their MAK study work by examining the role of hip muscle factors in persons with knee osteoarthritis. Dorothy Dunlop, PhD, and Rowland Chang, MD, MPH, have identified obesity and physical inactivity as predictors of poor overall health status and quality of life. They are developing and implementing community-based interventions to improve physical activity and quality of life.
THROUGH NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE, WE ARE CREATING A NATIONAL EPICENTER FOR HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, RESEARCH, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND ADVOCACY.

NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE

Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine are seeking to impact the health of humankind through Northwestern Medicine. We aspire to be the destination of choice for people seeking quality healthcare; for those who provide, support, and advance that care through leading-edge treatments and breakthrough discoveries; and for people who share our passion for educating future physicians and scientists. Our commitment to transform healthcare and to be among the nation’s top academic medical centers will be accomplished through innovation and excellence.

As an Innovation Engine at Northwestern Medicine, the Division of Rheumatology is successfully combining multispecialty clinical care with groundbreaking research—all with a goal to bring forth results that focus on and best serve people with rheumatologic diseases and conditions. We invite interested friends to join us by providing philanthropic support that advances the studies of our exceptional clinician-scientists and basic investigators, as well as supports state-of-the-art rheumatologic care and the training of our next generation of scleroderma experts.