

Making The Connection: Women And Autoimmune Disease

(NAPSA)—Does having lupus affect my ability to have children? What impact will type-1 diabetes have on other areas of my physical and emotional health? What are my treatment options for Crohn's disease?

These are familiar questions for the 30 million American women who suffer from autoimmune diseases. These women also know that getting answers to these questions is not always easy.

But now, a new book by award-winning medical journalist and author Rita Baron Faust and leading New York University School of Medicine researcher Dr. Jill P. Buyon provides the answers they seek.

In *The Autoimmune Connection: Essential Information for Women on Diagnosis, Treatment and Getting on with Your Life*, Faust and Buyon offer vignettes from women from all walks of life afflicted with different autoimmune diseases (ADs). From these personal stories emerges key information about how ADs can affect every stage of a woman's life, from menstruation to menopause and beyond.

"This ground-breaking book will enable women with autoimmune diseases to find help and hope," said Virginia Ladd, executive director of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association. "Moreover it will make great strides toward educating women about an important area affecting not only their physical health, but their mental well-being and their families and loved ones."

ADs all share the same underlying cause—autoimmunity. It is the process whereby the immune system mistakenly recognizes the body's own proteins as foreign invaders and begins producing antibodies that attack healthy cells and tissues, causing a variety of diseases. There are more

Autoimmunity Resources Online

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association—

<http://www.aarda.org>

National Institutes of Health—

<http://www.nih.gov>

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases—

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov>

National Library of Medicine—

<http://medlineplus.gov>



than 80 known and another 40 suspected ADs, including Graves' disease, primary antiphospholipid syndrome or PAPS, rheumatoid arthritis, autoimmune hepatitis and Sjögren's disease. Serious chronic illnesses, ADs have been cited as one of the top 10 leading causes of death among U.S. women aged 65 and younger. They represent the fourth largest cause of disability among women, just behind cancer, heart disease and mental illness. In addition, since symptoms can be vague and seemingly unconnected, diagnoses are often incorrect and/or can literally take years. In the meantime, patients frequently are labeled hypochondriacs.

"By giving women the facts about autoimmunity, this book allows them to take control of their lives and their illnesses for perhaps the first time," Ladd added. "It gives them the assurance that their symptoms are not 'all in their head' but rather real physical problems that need to be taken seriously."

The Autoimmune Connection is published by Contemporary Books, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

AARDA is the nation's only organization dedicated to bringing a national focus to autoimmunity as a disease category and supporting collaborative research in order to find better treatments and a cure for all ADs.