

Down Syndrome Association OF NORTHEAST OHIO



Medical News

September 26, 2023

Message from Dr. Laura Cifra-Bean

As the life expectancy for a person with Down syndrome has risen from 12 years in 1946 to 60 years currently, the population of adults has accordingly greatly increased. The need for medical care, employment, recreation, support for daily living and financial resources is great. In my own experience, it was much easier to know how to support my son Chris when he was in school. Chris has a wonderful life, full of activities and people he enjoys but it takes a lot of work to create and maintain his day-to-day schedule. DSANEO's Healthy Aging Coordinator, Debbie Picker M.Ed., created a wonderful resource to help families with this challenge, the adult services toolkit. It explains many different sources of support. Please recommend it to anyone with an adult loved one with a disability.



[Adult Services Toolkit](#)

Also, check out some of the works created by artisans with Down syndrome that are sold by DSANEO through our online and bricks and mortar artful 21 shop.

[Artful 21](#)

Focus on Autoimmune Issues

Ferrari M, Stagi S. Autoimmunity and Genetic Syndromes: A Focus on Down Syndrome. *Genes (Basel)*. 2021 Feb 13;12(2):268. doi: 10.3390/genes12020268. PMID: 33668420; PMCID: PMC7918365.

*People with Down syndrome (Ds) have immune dysregulation of both innate and adaptive immunity. Chromosome 21 codes for four interferon receptors, and three cytokines. People with Ds also have a decrease in memory B cells and abnormal T cell functioning. (Summarized below in figure 1. from the article) **Those with Ds have a four to six times higher risk of developing autoimmune diseases than those without Ds.** These commonly include thyroid disease, celiac disease, alopecia, type 1 DM, and idiopathic arthritis. Understanding the susceptibility to autoimmune disease will lead to strategies for treatment.*

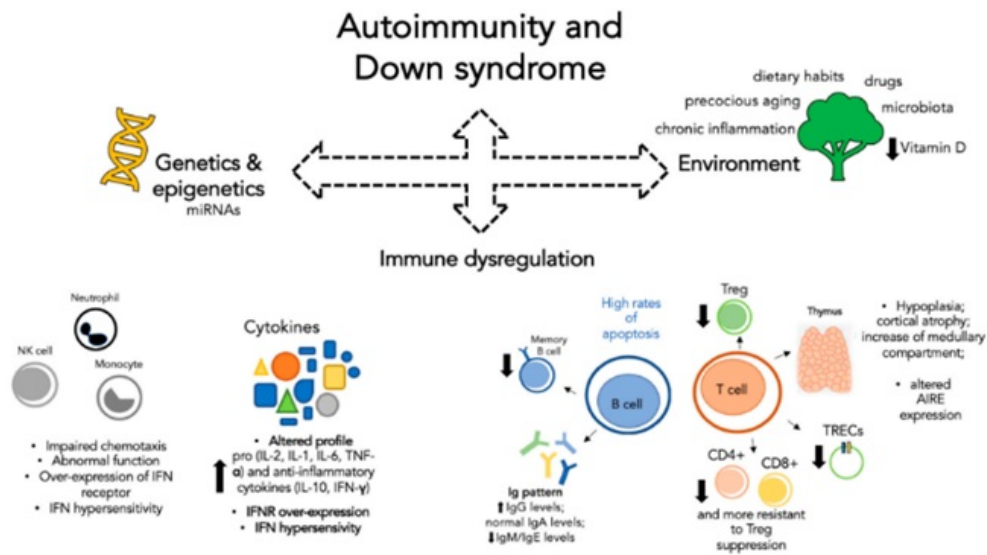


Figure 1. Schematic representation of factors contributing to autoimmunity in patients with Down syndrome. Autoimmunity represents a complex process in which immune dysregulation, genetics, and environmental factors act together. Each factor is capable of influencing and being influenced by the others. Immune dysregulation: Both the innate component (left) and the adaptive component (right) show alterations. Genetic and epigenetic: Genes and miRNAs. Environment: Precocious aging, dietary habits, drugs, microbiota, and chronic inflammation. (IFN: interferon; IFNR: interferon receptor; Ig: immunoglobulin; Treg: T regulatory cell; TRECs: T cell receptor excision circles; AIRE: autoimmune regulator.)

Pham AT, Rachubinski AL, Enriquez-Estrada B, Worek K, Griffith M, Espinosa JM. JAK inhibition for treatment of psoriatic arthritis in Down syndrome. *Rheumatology (Oxford)*. 2021 Sep 1;60(9):e309-e311. doi: 10.1093/rheumatology/keab203. PMID: 33630031; PMCID: PMC8410001.

Down syndrome causes hyperactivation of interferon and then Janus kinase (JAK) signaling. This letter to the editor reports a case in which a person with Ds who had severe psoriatic arthritis was treated effectively with tofacitinib (xeljanz) a JAK inhibitor. This JAK inhibitor decreases downstream signaling by the four interferon receptors coded for on chromosome 21.

Breastfeeding support for babies with Down syndrome



Julia's Way helps mothers who want to breastfeed their babies with Ds. They offer written resources and a monthly virtual support group led by two certified lactation consultants. There is no cost for these services.

- [Julia's Way website](#)
- [Breastfeeding & Down syndrome - Video](#)
- [Breastfeeding & Down syndrome: A comprehensive guide for Mothers and Medical Professionals](#)

New Webinar Recording from DSANEO

Physicians from Cincinnati Children's, Dr. Kelly Kamimura-Nishimura and Dr. Sara Williams, share the latest medical guidelines for children & adolescents with Down syndrome. Presented in Spanish.



Webinar Link

Free CME on Down Syndrome

The presenter is Dr. Murugu Manickam, clinical geneticist at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

<https://www.pediacastcme.org/care-and-support-for-children-and-teenagers-with->

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