



American Autoimmune

Related Diseases Association, Inc.

www.aarda.org

A nonprofit association bringing a national focus to autoimmunity, the major cause of chronic disease

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AARDA LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE NEW AUTOIMMUNITY CURRICULUM FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

Curriculum Teaches Students about the 100-Plus Autoimmune Diseases

DETROIT , April 21, 2014 – Furthering its mission of educating all Americans about autoimmunity and autoimmune disease (AD), the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, Inc. (AARDA) has launched the first-of-its kind autoimmune curriculum for teachers of grades three through eight.

Working with life sciences curriculum experts from the Education Center, LLC, AARDA has developed and is making available free to elementary and middle school teachers across the United States grade-appropriate curriculum materials that align with the Common Core Standards.

“If we want all Americans to truly understand what autoimmunity is and how the autoimmune response in individuals can cause any one or more of the more than 100 known autoimmune diseases, what better way than to begin educating them at the earliest possible age,” said Virginia T. Ladd, President of AARDA.

“With this curriculum, The Education Center is helping us do precisely that, and doing it in a way that is informative, engaging and age appropriate, while meeting the highest educational standards.”

The curriculum also is designed to educate teachers about ADs. Researchers believe the school environment may contain more triggers for ADs than other work environments, putting teachers at higher risk of developing these diseases.

The comprehensive curriculum materials include teacher guides, information on how the immune system works and how an unhealthy, malfunctioning immune system prompts the autoimmune response, student research and report projects and activities, and a parent send-home component.

The curriculum materials are available for download for all interested teachers nationwide. To download the curriculum, teachers may go to: themailbox.com/immunesystem until September 30, 2014. After that, it will be available on AARDA’s website, www.aarda.org.

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About Autoimmune Disease and AARDA

Autoimmune disease (AD) disproportionately affects women. Of the *50 million Americans living and coping with ADs*, more than 75 percent are women. AD is one of the *top 10 leading causes of death of women* under the age of 65. It encompasses more than *100 diseases*, including psoriasis, Graves' disease, Sjogren's syndrome, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and lupus. It is responsible for more than *\$100 billion in direct health care costs* annually.

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA) is the nation's only non-profit organization dedicated to bringing a national focus to autoimmunity as a category of disease and a major women's health issue, and promoting a collaborative research effort in order to find better treatments and a cure for all autoimmune diseases. For more information, please visit www.aarda.org.

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