

Disease trade-off: Malaria resistance comes with higher risk for multiple sclerosis, lupus

When it comes to [human evolution](#) and survival, fighting off one disease can sometimes mean that a person becomes more susceptible to another.

In the latest example of this finely balanced fight, new research reveals that a genetic mutation that increased [resistance to malaria](#) in one group of people also increased their rates of the autoimmune diseases of [multiple sclerosis](#) and [lupus](#).

By identifying the gene mechanism at play, the researchers said they may have illuminated a way to tamp down the haywire autoimmune responses that lead to multiple sclerosis and lupus.

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For the study, researchers combed through genetic data from people living [on Sardinia, an Italian island](#). Although people there are [famous](#) for their longevity, the population also has some of the world's highest rates of multiple sclerosis and lupus...After analyzing more than 2,000 patients from Sardinia, the team zeroed in on [a genetic mutation](#) in a gene called TNFSF13B.

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The researchers speculated that the mutation's prevalence in Sardinia could be traced to malaria outbreaks that once persisted on the island.

[Read the original source [here](#)]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Italian Island's Mutation Fights Malaria, But Raises Risk of Other Diseases](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)