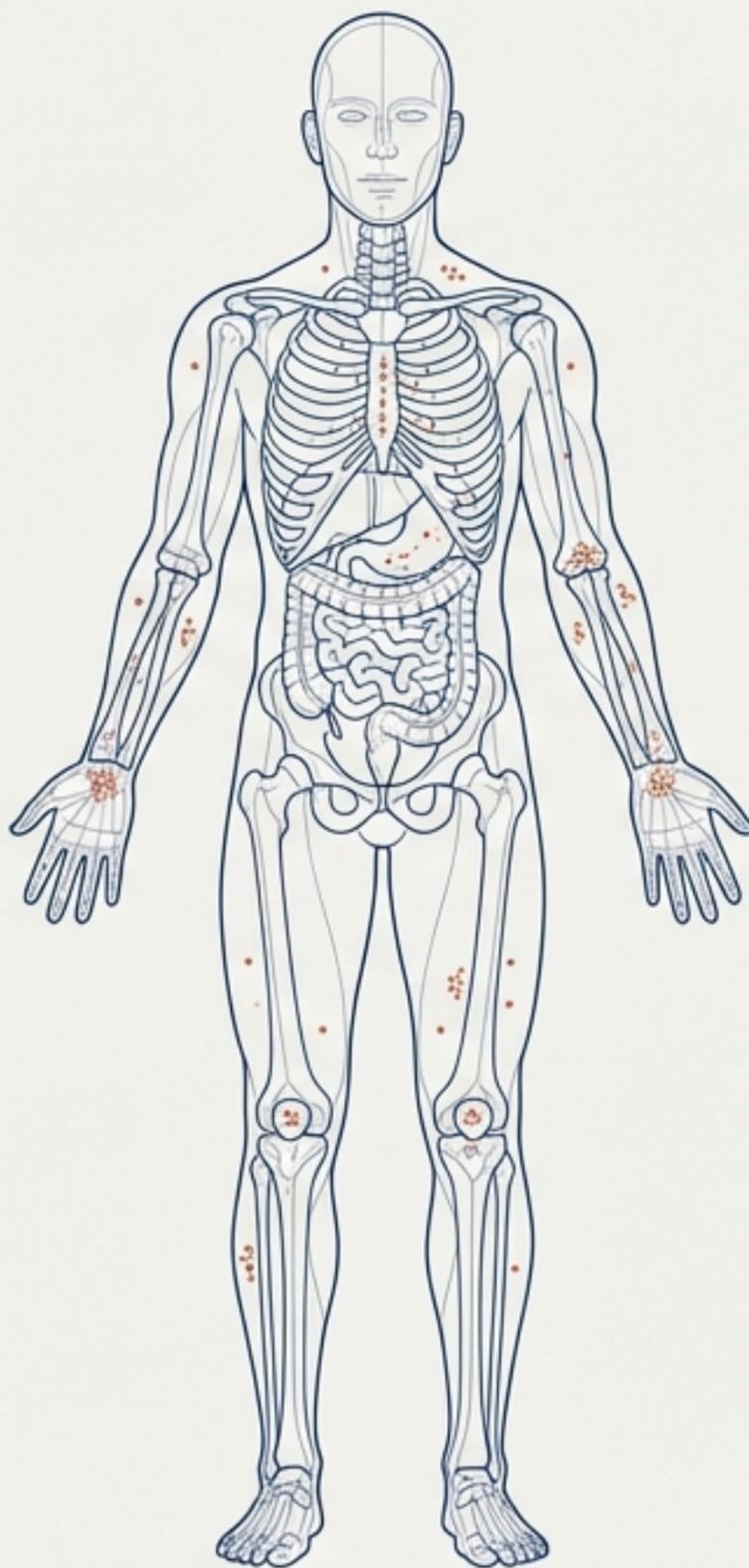


Understanding Autoimmune Diseases

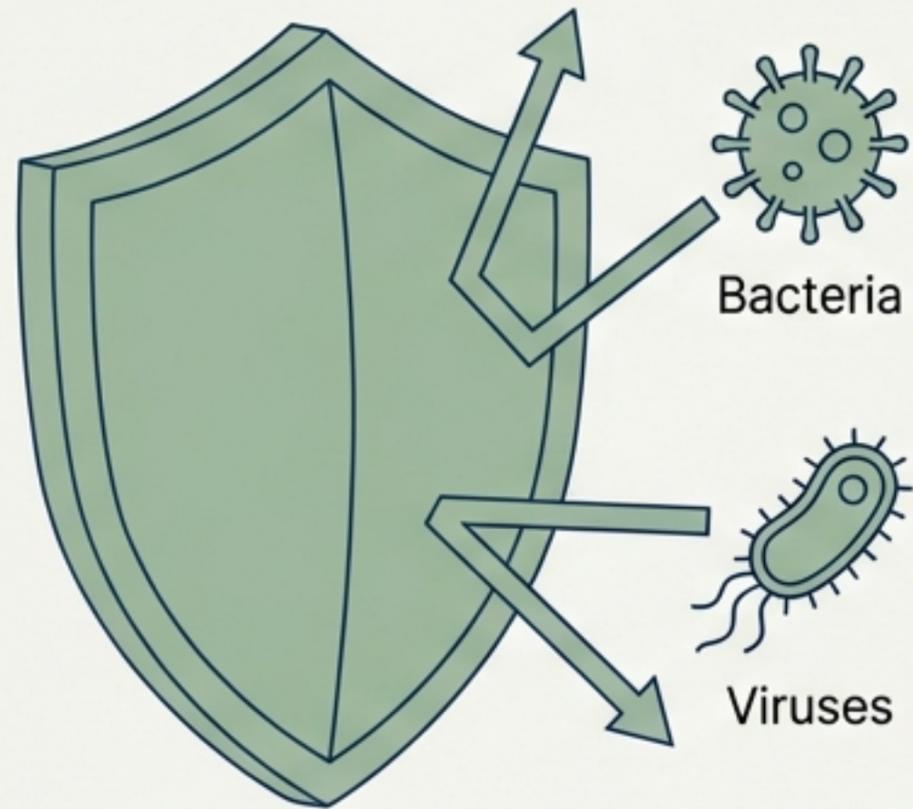
An essential clinical overview mapping pathology, diagnostic profiles, and multidisciplinary patient care.

A foundational reference guide detailing the mechanisms and management of conditions where the body's biological shield turns inward.



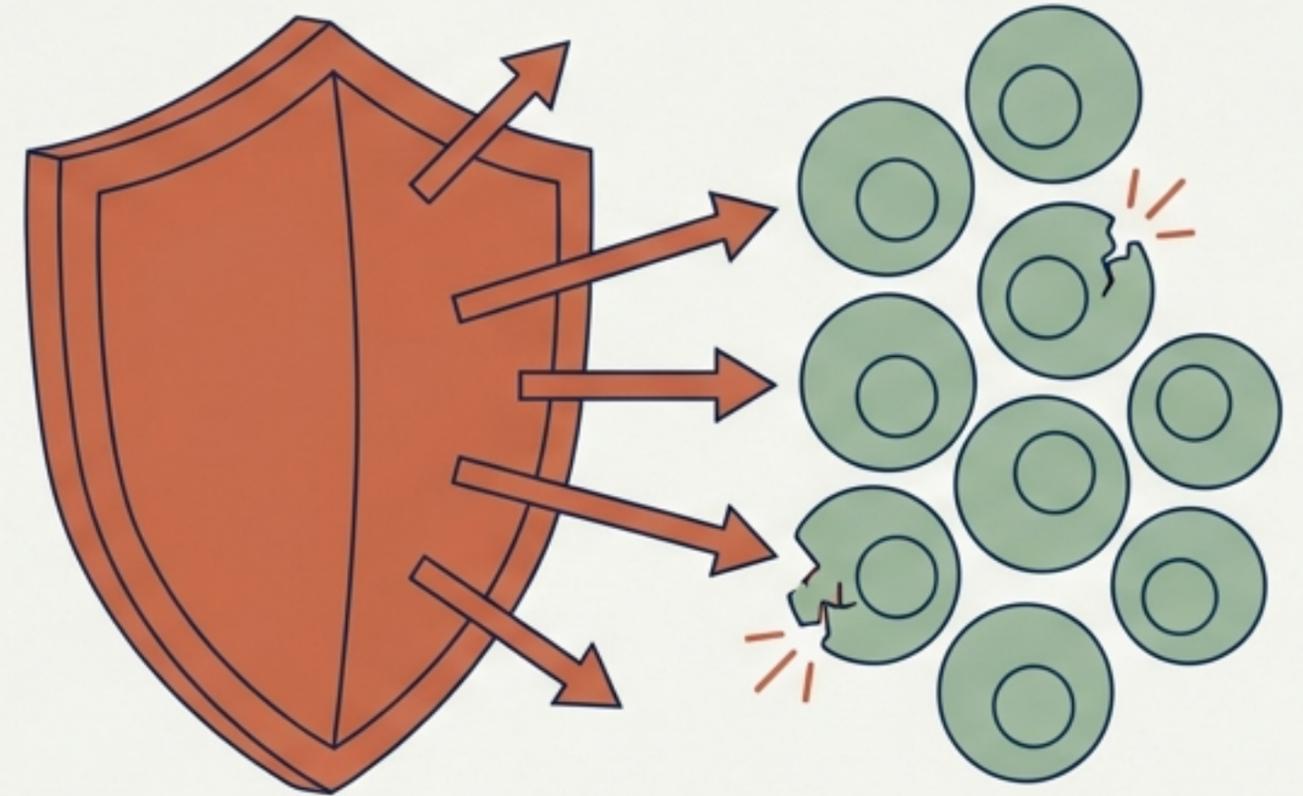
The Core Mechanism: Self vs. Non-Self

Healthy State



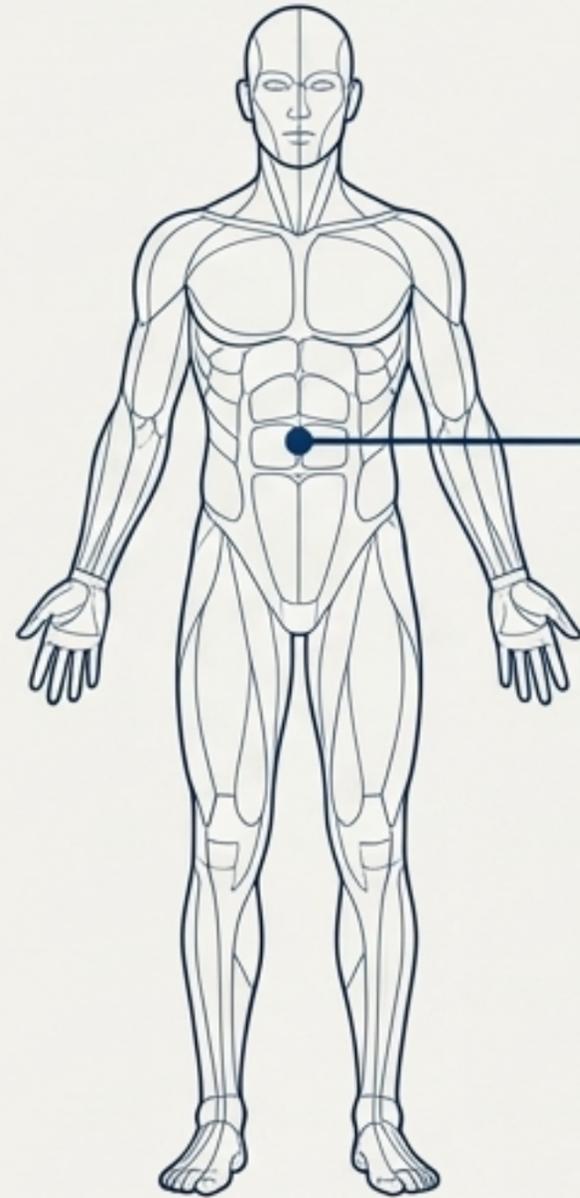
The Biological Shield: The immune system successfully identifies and neutralizes foreign invaders to protect the body.

Autoimmune State



The Error in Recognition: The system becomes overactive and fails to distinguish self from non-self. It mistakenly identifies the body's own healthy tissues and organs as threats, initiating an internal attack.

Categorizing the 80+ variations of immune dysfunction



Organ-Specific

The immune attack is localized, targeting a single organ or a specific tissue type.

Systemic

The immune attack affects multiple systems, tissues, and organs across the entire body simultaneously.

Insight: There are over 80 distinct types of recognized autoimmune disorders falling within these two primary classifications.

Diagnostic Profiles: Organ-Specific Conditions



Type 1 Diabetes

Target Area:

Pancreas

Mechanism:

The immune system targets and destroys the specific cells responsible for producing insulin.



Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Target Area:

Nervous System

Mechanism:

The immune system damages the protective coating of the nerves, fundamentally disrupting communication between the brain and the body.



Coeliac Disease

Target Area:

Small Intestine

Mechanism:

Triggered by the ingestion of gluten (a protein found in wheat), prompting the immune system to attack the intestinal lining.

Diagnostic Profiles: Systemic & Skin Conditions



Rheumatoid Arthritis

Scope

Systemic / Joints

Manifestation

The immune system attacks the joints, causing localized inflammation, profound stiffness, and pain.



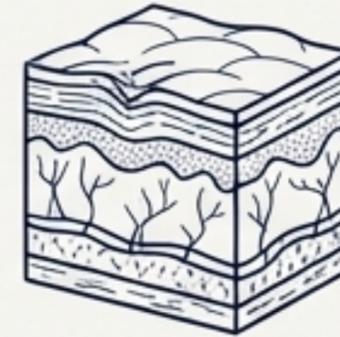
Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)

Scope

Systemic / Multi-organ

Manifestation

Affects many parts of the body including the skin, joints, and kidneys. A defining clinical sign is a butterfly-shaped rash across the face.



Psoriasis

Scope

Skin / Systemic

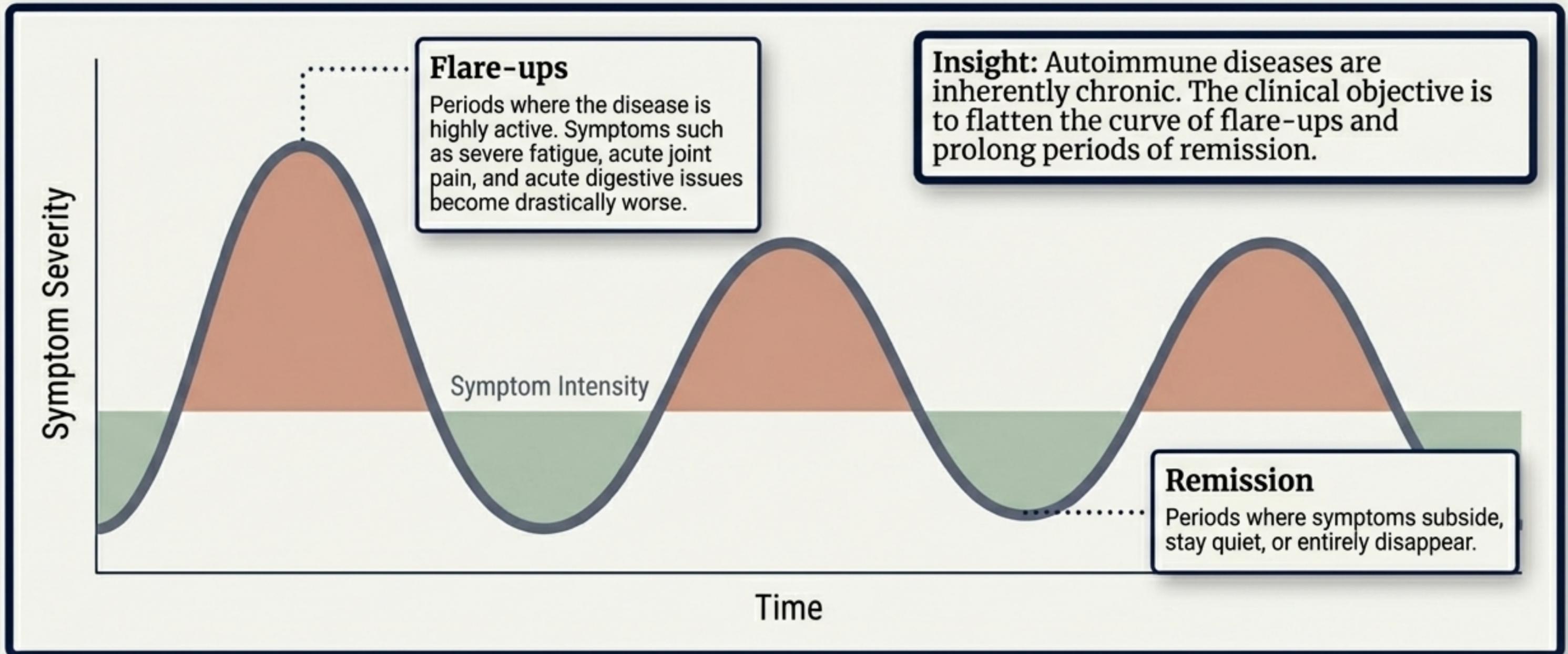
Manifestation

The condition forces the immune system to dramatically speed up skin cell growth, resulting in thick, red, and scaly patches on the skin.

The Clinical Matrix: Synthesizing common manifestations

| Condition | Scope | Primary Target | Defining Clinical Feature |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Type 1 Diabetes | Organ-Specific | Pancreas | Insulin-producing cell destruction |
| Coeliac Disease | Organ-Specific | Small Intestine | Triggered by gluten (wheat protein) |
| Multiple Sclerosis (MS) | Organ-Specific | Nervous System | Brain-body communication disruption |
| Rheumatoid Arthritis | Systemic | Joints | Inflammation, stiffness, and pain |
| Psoriasis | Systemic | Skin | Thick, red, scaly skin cell growth |
| Systemic Lupus Erythematosus | Systemic | Multi-organ | Butterfly-shaped facial rash |

The Temporal Dynamic: Managing the chronic cycle



Multidisciplinary management for chronic symptom control

Current Status: No Cure Exists | Goal: Symptom Management & Remission Extension



Medical Intervention

Utilization of targeted immunosuppressants to chemically dampen and reduce the overactive immune response.



Lifestyle & Therapy

Integration of physiotherapy, dedicated stress management techniques, and strict dietary controls (e.g., maintaining a completely gluten-free diet for Coeliac patients).



Clinical Monitoring

Crucial role of clinical support and healthcare assistants to actively monitor vital signs and provide acute, hands-on support during difficult flare-up periods.