

# Systemic lupus erythematosus impairs memory cognitive tests not affected by depression

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**Objective:** Our aim was to assess the contribution of depression to cognitive impairment in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). **Methods:** Clinical features, education, age, and Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) were evaluated in 82 patients with SLE and 22 healthy controls, all Chilean women. The Cambridge Neuropsychological Test Automated Battery (CANTAB eclipse™) assessing attention, spatial memory, and learning and executive function domains was applied. **Cognitive deficit definition:** a cut-off for definite impairment was defined as a score below -2 standard deviations in at least one outcome measure in two or more domains. ANCOVA with stepwise selection evaluated influences of health status (SLE or control), age, education, and HADS depression and anxiety scores on cognitive outcomes. To avoid overfitting, a shrinkage method was performed. Also, adjusted p-values for multiple comparisons were obtained. **Results:** Cognitive deficit affected 16 (20%) patients, an