

CHILDREN & JUVENILE DERMATOMYOSITIS (JDM)

Unlike Adult Dermatomyositis, in JDM There is No Increased Risk of Cancer

JDM Begins in Children Under 16 and Affects 3-5,000 Children in the United States

Juvenile Dermatomyositis (JDM) is a rare autoimmune disease that most commonly occurs in children 5-10 years of age. It is an inflammatory condition that affects the muscles, skin and blood vessels.

Dermatomyositis belongs to a group of diseases and disorders of the muscles called inflammatory myopathies. The cause is unknown; however, the leading theory is that the body's immune system mistakenly directs inflammation against muscle cells and blood vessels in the skin and muscles, resulting in damage, rash and weakness.

01 | Common Signs and Symptoms

The two most common features of JDM are a violet-colored rash on the face, eyelids and on the areas around the nails, elbows, knees, chest and back; and progressive muscle weakness of the trunk of the body. This may affect the child's ability to get out of a chair, off the floor or into a car.

Other symptoms include:

- Difficulty swallowing and voice changes
- Muscle pain or tenderness
- Fatigue, fever and weight loss
- Calcium deposits under the skin
- Stomach ulcers and intestinal tears
- Lung problems

02 | Diagnosing JDM

In order to obtain a positive diagnosis of Juvenile Dermatomyositis, your Pediatric Rheumatologist will likely perform the following tests:

- **MRI** – for detection of subtle muscle inflammation and swelling early in the disease

- **Muscle biopsy** – to reveal inflammation or damage of the muscular tissue, as well as muscular dystrophy or infection
- **Nailfold capillaroscopy** – abnormal swelling and distortion of the blood vessels can be seen with the cuticles of the nails. This finding suggests active JDM. The examination is performed by using a lighted magnifying tool to inspect the nailbed.

03 | JDM Treatment

Treatment can minimize inflammation, improve function and prevent disability. Remission is possible in many cases. Treatment options may include:

- Corticosteroids and methotrexate to treat inflammation
- Hydroxychloroquine to treat skin symptoms
- Intravenous therapy to block harmful antibodies
- Speech and Physical therapy

For additional resources on treatment options and finding support for JDM, please visit:

<http://www.myositis.org/learn-about-myositis/types-of-myositis/juvenile-dermatomyositis>

*Did You Know?
Juvenile Dermatomyositis
rarely occurs under age 2*

References

<https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/j/jdms>

<https://www.rheumatology.org/I-Am-A/Patient-Caregiver/Diseases-Conditions/Dermatomyositis-Juvenile>

<http://www.arthritis.org/about-arthritis/types/juvenile-dermatomyositis-jd/>