

What is Sjogren's Syndrome?

It is estimated that around 4 million people in the U.S. have Sjogren's syndrome.

1 Introduction

In Sjogren's syndrome, the immune system damages glands that produce and control moisture, causing chronic dryness throughout the body. Sjogren's syndrome is divided into two categories: primary form and secondary form. In primary form, this syndrome develops on its own and isn't caused by another health condition. In secondary form, Sjogren's syndrome develops in people with another rheumatic disease like rheumatoid arthritis or lupus.

2 Causes

There is no clear cause of Sjogren's syndrome, but it is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. The secondary form of Sjogren's syndrome may be triggered by a previous viral or bacterial infection or other health conditions.

3 Symptoms

Unusual dryness, particularly in the eyes and mouth, is the most common symptom. Other symptoms that may vary from person to person include:

- Joint pain
- Muscle weakness
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Fatigue
- Brain fog
- Tooth decay or loss
- Neuropathy
- Skin rashes
- Persistent dry coughing

4 Treatments

Treatment for Sjogren's syndrome depends on which parts of the body are affected. Dry eye and mouth symptoms can be managed by using over-the-counter eye drops and sipping water more frequently. Some other treatment options are:

- Saliva substitutes
- Medications to combat pain and inflammation
- Dry eye surgery (punctal plugs)
- Hormone therapy
- Immunosuppressants

Did you know?

Sjogren's syndrome is most common in women in their 40s and 50s.

For more information on Sjogren's syndrome and supportive resources, please visit sjogrens.org.

References:

<https://medlineplus.gov/sjogrenssyndrome.html>

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