Sjögren’s Syndrome
Ways It Can Affect The Body

Dry eye causes considerable discomfort and can lead to corneal ulcerations if left untreated. Eyes are more sensitive to irritants and susceptible to infection.

Dry mouth can affect diet and nutrition, speech, taste, tolerance to dental prostheses, and dental decay leading to poor oral health.

Skin disorders such as cutaneous vasculitis, Raynaud’s phenomenon, and digital ulceration can occur.

Some people with Sjögren’s have liver abnormalities, including primary biliary cirrhosis and chronic active hepatitis.

A small percentage of Sjögren’s patients develop pancreatitis.

People with Sjögren’s may have neurological problems including impaired memory and concentration. Peripheral neuropathy is seen.

Severe oral dryness may lead to dysphagia, with food “sticking” in the esophagus, or reflux esophagitis.

Sjögren’s can be complicated by recurrent upper respiratory infections including sinuses and, less frequently, by obstructive or interstitial lung disease.

Nutritional malabsorption may occur due to damage to the mucus of the stomach lining. Malabsorption can occur for a variety of reasons including adult onset Celiac disease.

Vaginal dryness is common.

Sjögren’s Syndrome is an under-recognized autoimmune disease which can mimic other diseases. It can often be difficult to diagnose due to the complexities of the disease and diversity of symptoms and patients frequently have no obvious clinical findings. On average, it can take 5-9 years to be diagnosed. Depending on their symptoms, an undiagnosed person may seek treatment from different specialists who will treat each symptom individually. The invisibility of the disease may add to the delay in diagnosis or not to be taken seriously by professionals. A general lack of awareness about this complicated disease may also add to the delay of diagnosis.

Sjögren's Syndrome affects:

1 in 70 Canadians
9 out of 10 patients are women between 35 to 65 years of age, but children can also suffer from Sjögren’s.
Sjögren’s can occur alone or as a complication in rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, scleroderma, primary biliary cirrhosis or other connective tissue diseases.

Sjögren’s is a serious condition and it is important for patients to be monitored closely for possible complications, development of related autoimmune phenomena and lymphoma.

Voicemail: 1-888-558-0950  Website: www.sjogrenscanada.org
Working Together to Conquer this Serious Autoimmune Disease Affecting up to 430,000 Canadians