CONQUERING Sjögren's

May/June 2026

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Janet E. Church
President & CEO,
Sjögren's Foundation

Letter from Our President & CEO

Hello Members,

One thing I have learned over the years from listening to patients and families, and as someone also living with Sjögren's disease, is that there is no single Sjögren's story.

Every experience can look different, and that is why the Sjögren's Foundation continues working so hard to elevate the voice of people living with Sjögren's and increase understanding of this complex disease. The more stories we share and the more experiences we highlight, the harder it becomes for Sjögren's disease to be misunderstood, minimized, or dismissed.

But awareness alone is not enough.

We are fiercely advocating for people with Sjögren's to be heard, believed, accurately diagnosed, and properly cared for by healthcare providers who understand the serious and systemic nature of Sjögren's. We also continue investing in and pushing for research that accurately reflects the true patient experience, including the full range of symptoms, challenges with disease management, and the impact Sjögren's can have on daily life and quality of life.

This issue of *Conquering Sjögren's* reflects many of these efforts. We are proud to share the full 2025 *Living with Sjögren's*® patient survey results summary, which captures the self-reported experiences of 6,360 Sjögren's patients. One thing the findings make very clear is that Sjögren's symptoms are often not occasional or isolated. Across the top 20 symptoms reported, more than 60% of respondents said they experience those symptoms on a daily or weekly basis and the majority believe these symptoms have a moderate to major impact on their life. For many people living with Sjögren's disease, symptoms are frequent, unpredictable, and relentless. We've always known this but now we have powerful data that reinforces it loud and clear. Sjögren's disease is systemic, serious, and far beyond dry eye and dry mouth!

You will also read a short recap from our successful National Patient Conference. Every year, the Conference reminds us how important connection and education are for people navigating Sjögren's disease. One of the standout presentations this year was Dr. Teja Kapoor's session on cardiovascular involvement and Sjögren's disease, which informed the article included in this issue.

Throughout Sjögren's Awareness Month in April, we shared 30 patient stories across our social media channels and this year we captured many of these stories on video. There is something incredibly powerful about hearing patients talk openly about their symptoms, challenges, and daily realities in their own words. You'll read a few of these stories in this issue. Together, these stories reached more than 1.5 million people through social media alone.

As we look ahead to World Sjögren's Day in July, we hope you will join us as we come together to raise awareness and show support for everyone living with Sjögren's disease. Whether you share your story, help educate others about Sjögren's disease, wear blue, spread information online, or support the Foundation's work, every action increases awareness, understanding, and momentum for the Sjögren's community.

Thank you for continuing to share your voices, stories, and experiences with us. They matter more than you know! ■

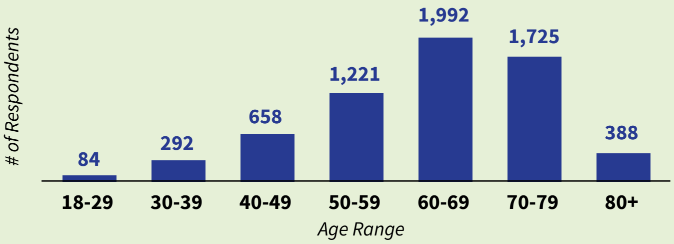
LIVING WITH Sjögren's®

2025 PATIENT SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

The 2025 *Living with Sjögren's®* patient survey was conducted by the Sjögren's Foundation®. This survey was designed to gain insight into the variety and severity of symptoms experienced by adults living with Sjögren's disease and better understand how Sjögren's disease impacts their quality of life.

Demographic Profile

Respondents (N=6,360) ranged in age from 18-98 years old and were predominantly female (95%) and white (85%). Nearly half (49%) of respondents were age 65 or older whereas 5.9% were under the age of 40.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Sjögren's disease is complex, heterogeneous, and presents relentless challenges to those living with the disease.

- **Symptoms are relentless and wide-ranging**, with dryness, fatigue, trouble sleeping, brain fog, and a variety of symptoms associated with pain affecting daily life rather than occasional flare-ups.
- **Fatigue is especially debilitating**, overshadowing other symptoms in how much it disrupts patients' ability to function, participate in daily activities, and maintain social commitments.
- **Sjögren's impacts sexual health**, affecting relationships with partners and the sexual function of people living with Sjögren's.
- **The disease's impact extends beyond physical symptoms**, as many people living with Sjögren's struggle to think clearly, concentrate, or remember — while also carrying a heavy emotional and mental health burden.

Greatest Symptom Impact

When asked which single symptom had the greatest negative impact on their lives over the past 12 months, 27% of respondents reported fatigue as the top symptom, followed by joint pain (11%) and brain fog (10%). Dry eyes, trouble sleeping, neuropathy, and tooth decay/dental caries were identified as the next most impactful symptoms, each by 8% of respondents, respectively.

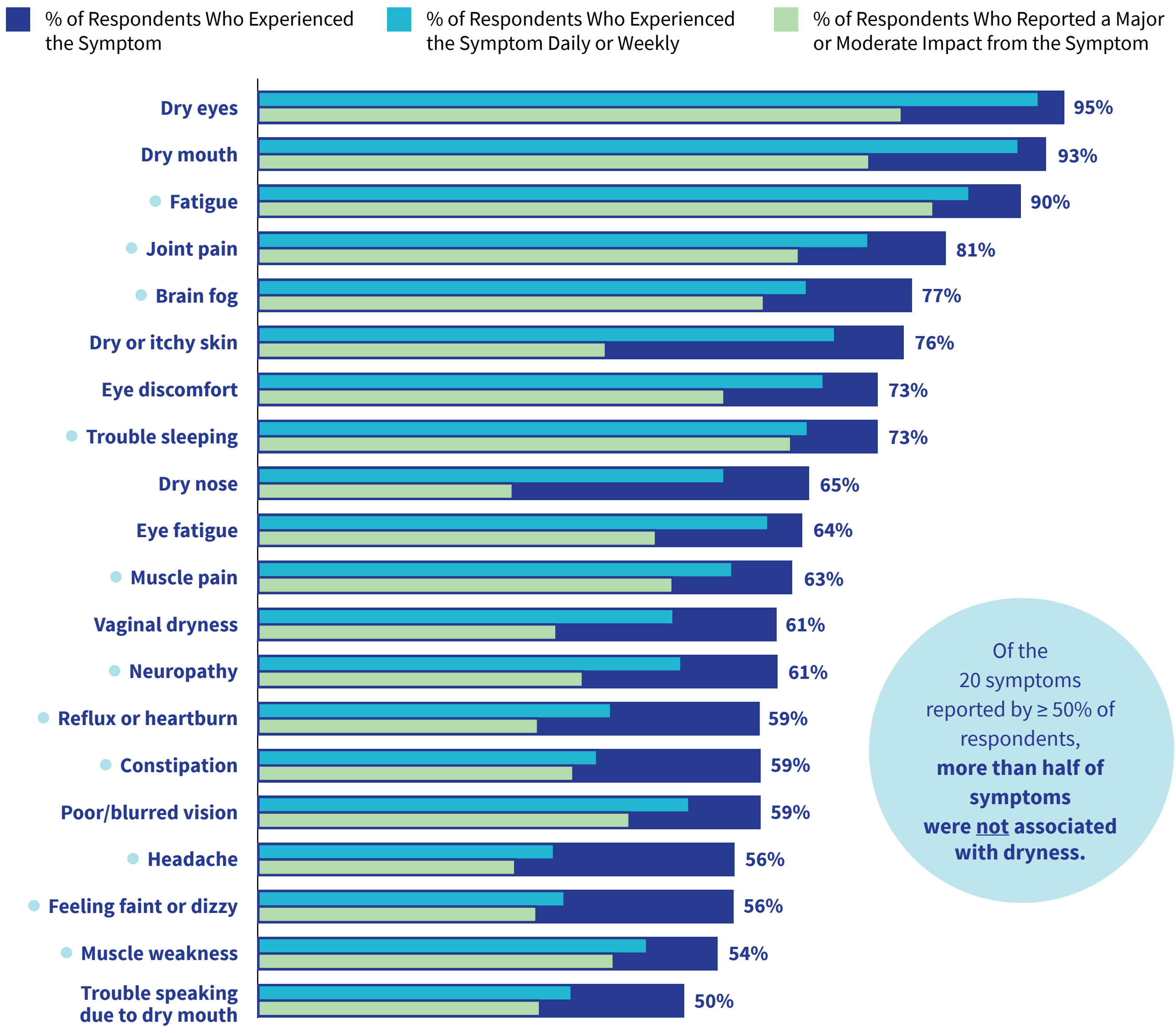
27%
Fatigue

11%
Joint pain

10%
Brain fog

Top 20 Symptoms Experienced in Past 12 Months *(with Frequency and Severity)*

Sjögren's disease is a complex, multi-system disease, and patients experience a wide range of symptoms. Respondents selected symptoms experienced in the past 12 months from a list of 46 and then rated each by frequency and severity. For the top 20 symptoms, more than 60% reported experiencing that symptom on a daily or weekly basis. Many respondents rated the symptom as having a major or moderate impact on their life.



Of the 20 symptoms reported by ≥ 50% of respondents, **more than half of symptoms were not associated with dryness.**

Other Reported Symptoms *(% Experienced in Past 12 Months)*

- **Morning stiffness:** 49%
- **Choking/trouble swallowing:** 48%
- **Tooth decay/dental caries:** 45%
- **Swollen joints:** 45%
- **Diarrhea:** 43%
- **Congestion (sinuses):** 39%
- **Mouth ulcers/sores:** 37%
- **Shortness of breath:** 37%
- **Chronic dry cough:** 34%
- **Migraine:** 31%
- **Excessive sweating:** 31%
- **Flares/rash from sun exposure:** 29%
- **Pain during intercourse (dyspareunia):** 28%
- **Rash:** 28%
- **Urinary tract/bladder infection/cystitis:** 23%
- **Lymph node pain or swelling:** 22%
- **Tachycardia:** 21%
- **Parotid gland swelling and tenderness:** 20%
- **Difficulty with orgasm:** 19%
- **Congestion (lungs):** 15%
- **Inability to sweat:** 14%
- **Purpura/Petechiae:** 11%
- **Yeast infection in mouth:** 10%
- **Vaginal infection:** 8%
- **Bradycardia:** 8%
- **Salivary gland stones or infections:** 6%

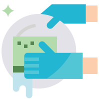
Impact on Quality of Life

Sjögren's has a substantially negative impact on quality of life. Most respondents reported that Sjögren's negatively impacted their relationships, social lives, ability to work, finances, activities of daily living, and overall mental and emotional well-being.

Daily Life & Work

81% of respondents agreed, **"My Sjögren's gets in the way of the things I need to do each day."**

72% of respondents reported a **negative impact to** performing activities of **daily life** (e.g., getting dressed, cooking, cleaning).



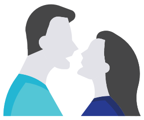
57% of respondents reported their **job/career** or ability to work was **negatively impacted** by Sjögren's.

Mental Health & Emotional Burden

86% of respondents agreed, **"Living with Sjögren's adds an emotional burden to my life."**

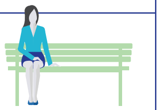
52% of respondents reported a diagnosis of **anxiety** and **47%** reported a diagnosis of **depression.**

Relationships & Social Life



Respondents reported that their Sjögren's has **negatively impacted their relationship** with their **spouse/partner** (**59%**) and with **family members** (**67%**).

Nearly half (49%) of respondents agreed, **"I feel lonely because of my Sjögren's."**



Sexual Health & Function

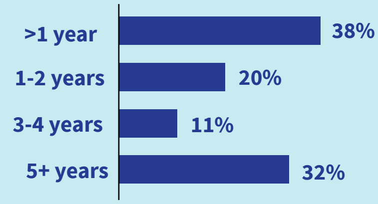
64% of respondents reported a **negative impact** to their **sex life.**

28% of all respondents reported **pain with intercourse**; **36%** of men reported **erectile dysfunction**.

19% of all respondents stated they have **difficulty with orgasm**.

Sjögren's Diagnosis Journey

Time to Diagnosis

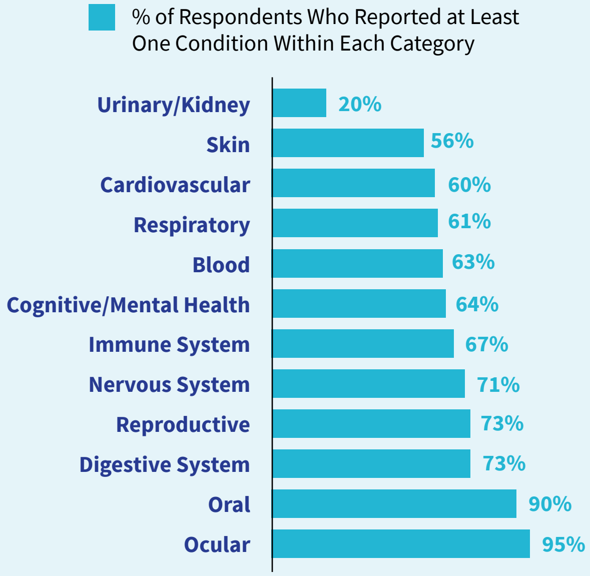


51.6 Years
average age of respondents when diagnosed with Sjögren's.

Healthcare Provider Diagnosed Conditions

Respondents were also asked to provide information about the conditions they have been formally diagnosed with by a healthcare provider. Diagnosed conditions impacting ocular and oral health were the most frequently listed, with conditions associated with digestive, reproductive, nervous, and immune systems following.

The most commonly reported immune system/ autoimmune-related diagnoses were rheumatoid arthritis (22%), Hashimoto's (16%), lupus (10%), and mixed connective tissue disease (9%). Additionally, 30% of respondents were also diagnosed with fibromyalgia.



2/3 of respondents (67%) reported having been diagnosed with at least **1 autoimmune condition in addition to Sjögren's.**

Treatment & Care

Respondents reported using a combined average of 7 total over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription treatments to help manage symptoms related to Sjögren's disease. For prescription treatments, 72% reported use of hydroxychloroquine (Plaquenil) or chloroquine, and 52% reported using other disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDS). Twenty percent of respondents reported prior or current use of biologic therapies. Most patients had used or were currently using OTC eyedrops (96%), oral comfort agents (85%), and fluoride mouth rinse or toothpaste (82%). Dental complications were common, with nearly half of respondents requiring crown(s) or having frequent caries/cavities.

73%

of respondents **agreed**, "Living with **Sjögren's adds a financial burden to my life."**

Non-pharmacologic strategies were widely used by respondents, with 83% reporting using exercise to help manage their Sjögren's, 75% making dietary changes, and many reporting using complementary and alternative therapies, such as massage (60%), meditation (52%), and acupuncture (32%).

36%

of respondents **disagreed** that their **primary provider for the management of Sjögren's collaborated with their other healthcare providers.**

On average, respondents reported seeing 5 different providers per year, including providers in rheumatology (86%), primary care (80%), dentistry (74%), and ophthalmology/optometry (70%). While majority of respondents saw a rheumatologist (78%) for primary management of their Sjögren's, 12.5% reported they relied on a primary care provider.

Most respondents reported positive experiences with their healthcare providers: 85% felt that their test results were explained in ways that they understood, 82% felt their healthcare provider was knowledgeable about Sjögren's, and 80% expressed confidence in the care received.

Opportunities exist for providers to better address common and complex manifestations of Sjögren's disease including fatigue, brain fog, and trouble sleeping; neurological and gastrointestinal symptoms and conditions; and conditions impacting sexual health and function. **People with Sjögren's also identified a need for improved coordination of their care across subspecialties.**

THIS IS SJÖGREN'S: Findings from the 2025 survey are consistent with those from the 2021 *Living with Sjögren's* survey, which included 3,622 respondents. (See the 2021 *Living with Sjögren's* Summary, available on www.sjogrens.org, for more information.) Given the alignment of findings across datasets, the Sjögren's Foundation believes that the results presented here reflect the lived reality of individuals with the disease.

About the Survey

The 2025 *Living with Sjögren's* survey was conducted in the United States using an online instrument administered by The Harris Poll on behalf of the Sjögren's Foundation. The online survey instrument received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before it was launched and was open to adults aged 18 years or older with a diagnosis of Sjögren's disease. Data collection occurred between August 7 and September 4, 2025. A total of 6,360 completed responses were received.

About the Sjögren's Foundation

The Sjögren's Foundation is the only non-profit organization focused on increasing research, education, and awareness for Sjögren's, one of the most prevalent autoimmune disorders, affecting as many as 4 million Americans, with an estimated 2.5 million patients currently undiagnosed.

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April Awareness Month

Sharing What It Means to Live with Sjögren's

Throughout April, patients, advocates, healthcare professionals, and supporters used their voices to help educate and inspire others, with Awareness Month content organically reaching more than 1.5 million individuals across social media. This year also introduced a new video story feature, resulting in 67 community story submissions, including 11 personal video stories. From diagnosis journeys to daily resilience, these shared experiences helped bring greater visibility to the realities of living with Sjögren's while reminding others in the community that they are not alone.

AMY

I wish I knew how this disease was going to progress when I was officially diagnosed, so ask questions whenever you need to. If you feel like your doctor isn't giving you the proper attention, find a different doctor. Bring someone with you to your appointments so they can listen, and take notes. Appointments can be overwhelming, and you want to make sure you hear all that's been said. Take things 5 minutes at a time. It's not easy to do, because this disease can be scary, but it's important to try to stay in the present. Set realistic, achievable goals for yourself when it comes to how you expend your energy. Manage other people's expectations of you. It's not only important, it's crucial to set boundaries. Most importantly, never lose hope. Tomorrow is another day to start again, and do things differently than the day before.

BRIAN

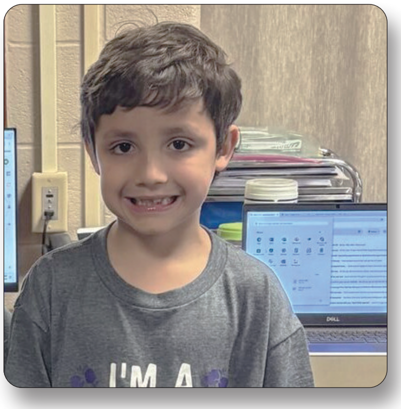
The brain fog making it feel like my thoughts are swimming through syrup. Physical fatigue resonating for a week after lifting a 60lb box when I used to deadlift 415 lbs. Waking up in the middle of the night choking on nothing because my airway is so dry. Eyes glued so shut I need to blindly make way to the shower to see again.

I can't play any sports anymore. I can't rock climb, run marathons, workout consistently. I can't stay up to see my friends after 7pm.

I'm an incredibly optimistic person. But having to repeat the same news that "There is no cure", "the Doctor's aren't sure what we can do", "it's already affecting my organs", "it affects my whole body; drinking more water is not enough" is a heartache in and of itself.

Sjögren's is an arduous and slow burning disease. My new goal is to connect information to patients, and now become a physician emphasizing the effects of chronic stress on the damaging effects to our physiology.

LENNON



Sjögren's has affected my son in many ways, especially when it comes to school and sports. He suffers from fatigue and joint pain, and because of medications that lower his immune system, he seems to get sick more often. His face swells, and the dryness in his eyes can make schoolwork and using computers difficult.

As a family, we try to practice good hand hygiene, and he is great about wearing a mask. He has also learned to communicate his pain and let me know when he needs medication.

My son is so strong because of all the testing and everything that has come with this disease. We have an awesome community, and even his teachers and school have gotten involved and are completely understanding. Sjögren's is a new subject for many people, but they have taken the time to learn more about it and support him.

BEN

My lifestyle changes include: preserving my energy, being careful how much energy I expend, having an organized (not busy) schedule, and taking it easy if I know I have to work the next day or go out and do something taxing. It's okay to say no. My spirit animal having Sjögren's is the sloth. They have to preserve their energy and not overdo things. Also, they didn't choose to be sloths, just like none of us chose to have Sjögren's. It's like we are a battery, always functioning with one bar of energy left.

To improve my quality of life: I take an antidepressant for mental health. I keep working although at a lesser capacity as I accept that I don't have the same body as before. You push through and do what you can. And like the frog grabbing the cranes neck while he is being swallowed, never, ever give up!

MARIA

I started getting constant sinus infections. My doctor looked at me and said I was way too young

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"Awareness Month" continued from page 9 ▼

for Sjögren's but agreed to do all the blood work anyways. I was referred to a rheumatologist. I'll never forget that day sitting there in the doctor's office at 21 being told that she had no idea what my future was going to hold. It was incredibly scary.

SALLY

I wish that people knew that Sjögren's was more than just a dry mouth and dry eyes. Sjögren's affects your whole body. One of the biggest things is fatigue and brain fog, and pain. It's hard to learn to live with all the various pieces of Sjögren's. And thankfully, the Foundation has made it more accessible to doctors to know more about how to determine and diagnose Sjögren's in people.

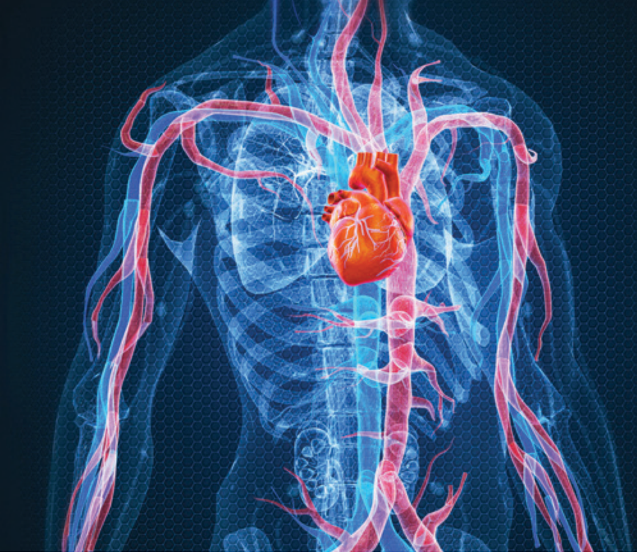
CHEMI

The biggest advice I would give to someone newly diagnosed is to listen to your body and take your symptoms seriously from the beginning. It can be easy to downplay what you're feeling or try to push through, especially if you're used to being active or high-performing, but learning to pay attention early makes a big difference over time. I would also encourage people to advocate for themselves—whether that's with your healthcare team or in your work environment. If you need support or accommodations, it's important to speak up and create a lifestyle that actually supports your health. Making small, intentional changes early on—whether it's how you manage your energy, your stress, or your daily routines—can help you avoid burnout and better manage your symptoms long-term. And most importantly, give yourself grace. You're learning how to live in your body in a new way, and that takes time. You don't have to have everything figured out right away.

HOLLY

I wish people knew that Sjögren's existed instead of, 'oh, you're just tired.' 'Oh, you're just lazy.' No, I have a disease that is affecting me so immensely that, you know, I need to rest for two days after I do a thing. You know, it's something that just sucks and nobody knows what it is. So that would help if people knew what it was. Some good tips for managing Sjögren's, I would say, is don't commit to doing things that you probably won't be able to do. Dinners and trips and stuff like that, try to just say, 'I can let you know on that day,' because then you won't make people mad. I've lost so many people in my life because I couldn't commit to, you know, a trip or something like that, and they just don't understand. ■

Note: *Stories may be edited for clarity, grammar, or length. The experiences, advice, and recommendations shared reflect those of the individual. The Sjögren's Foundation encourages all readers to consult with their healthcare provider before making any changes to their care or disease management.*



Cardiovascular System and Sjögren's Disease

Expert Reviewed by Teja Kapoor, MD

Sjögren's can affect the entire body — and each person with Sjögren's experiences the disease differently. Some people living with Sjögren's disease experience symptoms and conditions that affect the **cardiovascular system** (the heart, blood, and blood vessels). Understanding signs and symptoms can help you take action and prevent a heart attack or stroke.

About the Cardiovascular System

The cardiovascular system (also known as the circulatory system) is made up of the heart, blood, and blood vessels.

Your heart pumps blood throughout the body through blood vessels. Your blood carries oxygen and other nutrients to your organs. It also transports waste, including carbon dioxide, produced by your organs. Carbon dioxide is transported away from the organs through the blood vessels to the heart. The heart then pumps it into the lungs to be exhaled.

There are three main types of blood vessels:

- **Arteries** carry blood away from the heart.
- **Veins** carry blood back to the heart.
- **Capillaries** are a small network of blood vessels found near organs or tissues. Capillaries have thin walls that allow for oxygen and nutrients to be delivered and waste to be removed from cells.

The cardiovascular system is always working to make sure that you are getting enough blood and oxygen to your organs. For example, the cardiovascular system gets blood and oxygen to your heart and your brain, which is especially important during increased physical activity or even stress.

How Sjögren's Disease Affects the Cardiovascular System

Experts are working to better understand exactly how Sjögren's disease impacts the cardiovascular system. Some research has suggested that people with Sjögren's disease have a higher risk for cardiovascular diseases and events (like heart attack or stroke).

Chronic inflammation from Sjögren's disease may damage the tissues and organs of the cardiovascular system, including the blood vessels and heart muscle. This inflammation can also damage your autonomic nervous system, which is the part of the nervous system that controls body processes that you don't have to think about, like your heartbeat. Damage to the autonomic nervous system can directly affect how your heart functions. Some studies have also shown that higher levels of certain autoantibodies associated with Sjögren's disease are linked to a higher risk of cardiovascular issues.

Cardiovascular Conditions Associated with Sjögren's Disease

Some people with Sjögren's disease can develop certain cardiovascular conditions. These cardiovascular conditions include:

- **Hypertension** — Also called high blood pressure
- **Arrhythmias** (irregular heartbeat) — Including *bradycardia* (slow heartbeats), *tachycardia* (fast heartbeats), *heart block* (when the heart beats too slowly or skips beats), and *atrial fibrillation* (irregular heartbeat of the upper chambers of the heart)
- **Inflammation** of certain parts of the heart, including the heart muscle (*myocarditis*) and the membrane lining that surrounds the heart (*pericarditis*), and of the blood vessels (*vasculitis*)
- The **formation of blood clots** when they're not supposed to, which can lead to blockages in the arteries of your lungs (*pulmonary embolism*) or blockages in the deep veins of your body, particularly your legs (*deep vein thrombosis*)

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“Cardiovascular” continued from page 11 ▼

- **Atherosclerosis** — A buildup of fatty deposits called plaque in the arteries
- **Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS)** — An increased heart rate when standing up from a sitting or lying position
- **Raynaud’s phenomenon** — When the blood vessels tighten in response to certain triggers (such as cold temperatures or stress) and restrict blood flow to parts of the body, most often in the fingers and toes

Other cardiovascular conditions that people living with Sjögren’s disease can experience include:

- **Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF)** — A condition where the heart muscle is too stiff. In this condition, although the heart muscle pumps normally (called preserved ejection fraction), it cannot relax fully and fully fill with blood.
- **Coronary artery disease** — When plaques build up in the heart’s coronary arteries and cause them to narrow, making it difficult for blood, oxygen, and nutrients to get to the heart muscle.
- **Microvascular disease** — Poor circulation and reduced blood flow in the coronary arteries that is not caused by plaque build-up.
- **Myocardial ischemia** — When parts of the heart muscle don’t get enough oxygen.
- **Non-ischemic cardiomyopathy** — When the heart is weak and can’t pump blood, but clogged arteries are not the cause.

Cardiovascular Signs and Symptoms of Sjögren’s Disease

Signs and symptoms associated with cardiovascular problems in Sjögren’s disease can include:

- Tightness or pain in your chest, particularly after physical activity, when you change your body position, when you breathe deeply, or when you push on your chest
- Persistent shortness of breath or feeling winded
- Feeling overly fatigued, especially after activity
- Swelling of your legs
- Dizziness upon standing
- Problems with blood clotting

Signs and Symptoms of Serious Cardiovascular Events

It’s also important to know the signs of a serious cardiovascular event — a heart attack or stroke — and what to do. If you notice signs of either problem, call for emergency help right away.

A **heart attack**, which is also known as a **myocardial infarction**, happens when blood flow to the heart is reduced or blocked. Signs and symptoms of a heart attack include:

- Chest pain or discomfort that may feel like pressure, tightness, or squeezing that lasts more than a few minutes
- Pain or discomfort in the shoulder, arm, neck, jaw, or upper belly
- Shortness of breath
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Cold sweat
- Fatigue (feeling very tired), lightheadedness, or dizziness
- Nausea

Men and women can experience different heart attack symptoms. Men often experience chest pain as the first sign of a heart attack. Women often have more subtle symptoms, such as unusual fatigue, anxiety, upset stomach, and pain in the shoulder, back, or arm. These symptoms often appear before the more common symptoms of a heart attack. ***If you have chest pain that lasts more than 15 minutes and isn’t relieved by rest, you should call 911***.

A stroke occurs when blood supply is reduced or stops flowing to the brain. Signs and symptoms of a stroke include:

- Dizziness
- Trouble speaking, writing, or understanding words
- Numbness, weakness, or paralysis (being unable to move) of the face, arm, or leg
- Drooping on one side of the face
- Problems seeing that come on suddenly (blurred vision)
- Sudden, extremely painful headache
- Trouble walking

Remember **F.A.S.T.** to recognize a stroke and act quickly:

- Face drooping, where one side of the face starts to droop or become numb. If you try to smile and cannot, call 911.
- Arm weakness, where one arm can be weak or numb. If you raise your arms and one arm drifts downward, this could be a sign of a stroke.
- Speech difficulty, or when you are unable to speak or have slurred speech.

- Time to call 911. If you experience any of these symptoms, even if they go away, call 911 and get to a hospital immediately.

Diagnosing Cardiovascular Conditions

If you notice any cardiovascular symptoms, share them with your primary care doctor, rheumatologist (a specialist who treats autoimmune diseases), or a cardiologist (a specialist who treats cardiovascular diseases). They can check your blood pressure or order blood tests to screen for cardiovascular conditions.

Your doctor may also order more specific tests to accurately diagnose your cardiovascular condition. These include:

- **Echocardiogram (echo)**, which is an ultrasound to check the heart structure and function, including its ability to pump blood. An echo is normally done while lying down. Your doctor may also want to check your heart function while you're active. This type of echo, called a stress echo, requires you to be on a treadmill or stationary bike while your doctor does the echo test.
- **Electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG)**, which measures how fast your heart is beating, the rhythm of your heartbeat, and the electrical activity of your heart. This EKG test can either be done in the doctor's office or using a portable Holter monitor. You wear the Holter monitor over 24 or 48 hours to collect data about your heart while doing your normal daily activities.
- **Cardiac magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)** and cardiac positron emission tomography (PET) scan are imaging tests that your doctor can use to check for any damage to your heart muscle or issues with blood flow.
- **Right heart catheterization** is a minimally invasive procedure where a thin tube (catheter) is inserted through a blood vessel in your arm, leg, or neck and threaded to the right side of the heart to measure blood pressure and oxygen levels.

Managing Cardiovascular Conditions and Sjögren's Disease

Not everyone who has Sjögren's disease will develop a cardiovascular disease or have a cardiovascular event like a heart attack. Despite this, it's important for all people with Sjögren's to take care of their cardiovascular health. Managing Sjögren's disease is an important part of preventing cardiovascular problems. Reducing the systemic inflammation caused by Sjögren's helps protect your heart from damage.

These lifestyle tips can also help you take care of your cardiovascular system while living with Sjögren's disease:

- **Eat a heart-healthy diet**. Build meals with plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, proteins (like fish, eggs, or beans), and fat-free or low-fat dairy. Limit red meat and foods that are high in sugar and salt.
- **Get regular physical activity**. Although physical activity can be difficult for people with Sjögren's disease, even gentle movement like short walks or yoga can help your heart. You don't have to be active every day, but you can try to make time for physical activity on days you're feeling up to it.
- **Get enough sleep**. Poor sleep can worsen Sjögren's symptoms.
- **Reduce stress**. Practice mindfulness or meditation, visit a therapist, and spend time with family and friends.
- **Stay hydrated**. Be sure to drink water throughout the day.
- **Avoid tobacco products**. Talk with your doctor or seek other types of support if you need help quitting tobacco.

Depending on your condition, your doctor might recommend taking medicines to help manage it. Talk with your doctor about whether cardiovascular-specific medicines might help you (for example, medicines to help control blood pressure, treat arrhythmia, or lower your cardiovascular risk).

Get Support for Managing Sjögren's Disease

If you're experiencing cardiovascular symptoms of Sjögren's disease, or if you've been diagnosed with a cardiovascular condition, it's important to take steps to protect your cardiovascular health. Make sure you visit your doctor regularly and make healthy lifestyle choices to support good cardiovascular health. Taking these steps can help you feel better and avoid serious, life-threatening problems, like heart attack and stroke.

Get support in managing cardiovascular impacts of Sjögren's — or other aspects of Sjögren's — from your doctor or cardiologist. ■

Walk for Sjögren's 2026

Your Place, Your Pace!

Fall: **October 10, 2026**

Choose your location.
Choose your pace.
Walk with purpose.

REGISTER TODAY.
Scan the QR code or visit:
walkforsjogrens.org/fall

SCAN ME

Your participation supports the 4 million Americans living with Sjögren's disease by helping to:

- DRIVE GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH
- SUPPORT PATIENT & PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION
- ADVOCATE FOR PATIENTS
- BUILD A STRONG, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Raise $75 and earn the official 2026 Walk T-shirt!

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Sjögren's Foundation®
National
Patient 2026
Conference

2026 National Patient Conference Brings Education, Community, and Hope

The 2026 National Patient Conference was successfully held virtually on April 10–11, bringing together more than 1,300 patients, care partners, and community members from across the country for two afternoons of trusted education and connection. The event featured expert-led sessions on the many impacts of Sjögren's disease, including oral health and ocular health, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, pulmonary, and neurological manifestations, while also highlighting the latest research and progress toward new treatments.

Attendees had the opportunity to hear directly from leading clinicians and researchers, participate in live Q&A sessions, and gain practical insights for managing life with Sjögren's. Popular sessions included updates on the new Peripheral Nervous System Clinical Practice Guideline, findings from the 2025 Living with Sjögren's® patient survey, and the always well-received Chat with a Doc session.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many sharing appreciations for the accessible presentations, relevant topics, and sense of community the conference provided. One attendee shared, "Came away with many tips, information, and most of all HOPE! What a wonderful community!"

Another attendee shared, "I learned so much and was encouraged with the positive work being done, as well as the knowledge and compassion of the presenters. Thank you to everyone involved and Janet and the Foundation for all you do. Sometimes this disease can be overwhelming, and these two days gave me hope."

The conference reinforced the Foundation's commitment to empowering patients through education, community, and hope for the future. For those unable to attend live, on-demand recordings remain available, ensuring continued access to this valuable content.

Missed the conference?

You can still purchase access to the 2026 National Patient Conference recordings. Access remains available for six months following the conference. All sessions are included except for the Chat with a Doc session.

Scan the QR code to purchase access to the recordings or go to sjogrens.org/npc

Already registered?
All attendees can continue to access the event recordings during the six-month access period.

GO PAPERLESS

Go Green with *Conquering Sjögren's*!

Members who currently receive *Conquering Sjögren's* by mail can now opt out of the printed version and receive the digital issue delivered directly to your email.

To submit your opt-out request, please scan the QR code or visit the URL below to complete the form. Go green and enjoy convenient digital access to *Conquering Sjögren's*.

https://sjogrens.org/gogreen

Please note: This opt-out applies only to the *Conquering Sjögren's* newsletter.
You will still receive other relevant Foundation print mailings.

Walk for Sjögren's

Thank You for a Meaningful Spring Season of Walking, Awareness, and Community

The Sjögren's community came together once again in support of the Foundation's mission during the 2026 Philadelphia Tri-State Walk for Sjögren's on May 2 and the "Spring Walk for Sjögren's — Your Place, Your Pace!" on May 16. Together, over 650 participants, donors, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters helped raise more than $180,000 to advance research, education, awareness, and advocacy efforts for those living with Sjögren's.

From in-person participation in Philadelphia to supporters walking in their own communities across the country, this year's Walks reflected the incredible compassion, resilience, and dedication of the Sjögren's community. Teams and individuals walked in honor of loved ones, shared personal stories, and helped spread awareness about the realities of living with Sjögren's.

We are deeply grateful to all participants, donors, volunteers, teams, and sponsors whose support helped make the Spring Walk season such a meaningful success. Every step taken and every dollar raised helps strengthen programs and resources for the Sjögren's community while bringing hope for the future.

Thank You to Our National Sponsors

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continued page 18 ▼

"Walk for Sjögren's"

continued from page 17 ▼

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Thank You to Our 2026 Walk for Sjögren's Champions Circle

The Walk for Sjögren's Champions Circle recognizes registered walkers who went the extra mile by making a personal donation of $1,000 or more. These champions are helping lead the way in funding research, increasing awareness, and supporting the Sjögren's community.

Philadelphia Tri-State

Vatinee Bunya, MD, MSCE
Tom and Christine Iatesta

Spring Your Place, Your Pace!

Susan Barajas
Kathy Lawrence
Alicia Morin
David Morrison
Linda Neall
Suzanne Wixson

Thank you again to everyone who participated in and supported the 2026 Walk for Sjögren's season. Together, we will continue conquering the complexities of Sjögren's.

IN MEMORIAM

In Memory of Mary Ellen Capener
Susan McGlauchlen
Sherrie Orcholski
Jennifer Zupan

In Memory of Eunice Gage Coon
Amy Culp
Bonnie Hummel
Sue Laurent
Christy Watson

In Memory of Jayne Veal Durham
Waylan Arnold
Linda Benzing
Cheryl Carbone
Casie Coats
Theresa Conley
Judy Dilger
Brenda Durham
Ray Durham
Tony Durham
Kathleen Green
Kristen Jelinek
Mary Kay Keating
William Mallard Jr.
Cynthia McNabb
Cindy Mulcahy

In Memory of Joseph Gonzales
Maria Horsch

In Memory of Jan Gordon
Kevin McCaffrey

In Memory of Rosemary Gottlieb
Marylyn Kampo

In Memory of Eileen Guldin
Christina Lea

In Memory of Michael Gunderson
Ruth Branham

In Memory of Helene Kushnir
Dorothy Ward

In Memory of Vera LiPuma
BVLT Resident Association

In Memory of Sandy Nelson
Shari DeUrso

In Memory of Ruth Nunez
Ron Benoit
Christopher Fox
Lindsey Sprofera

In Memory of Judith Silva-Kofler
Angela Costelli

In Memory of Ella Whitten Sisler
Darla Rae
Joe Sisler

In Memory of Diane Stadtmiller
Roberta Bekerman
Barbara Boggiano
Susan Breese
Mary Ann Guzylak
Maureen Woods

In Memory of Linda Sue Sweetman
Mark Anema
Kristine Berry
Elizabeth Bloom
Tammy Hayutin
Milton Moore
Rocio Ramirez
Jim Reitz
Fred Ritsema
Ross Sweetman
Ann Van Hofwegen

In Memory of Terri Wing
Lisa and Terry Metzner

In Memory of Colleen Crawford
Christine Currin

In Memory of Marcia Davis
Gary Davis

In Memory of Heidi Ann Burke
John Burke

IN HONOR

In Honor of All Sjögren's Warriors
Joann Chiles

In Honor of Amy Zappia
Letty King

In Honor of AnnMarie Beaulieu
Lynn Beaulieu

In Honor of Beth Wiggans
Andrew Poshadel

In Honor of Brenda Koplin
Judith Strausberg

In Honor of Carolyn Kennedy
Julia Dennis
Kathleen Kennedy

In Honor of Eunice Coon
Rhonda Jackson

In Honor of Janet Jackson Brandt
Joyce Jackson

In Honor of Joan Kato
Evelyn Nall

In Honor of Linda Ruth Clay
Brenda Conner

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In Honor of Nancy Visocki
Barbara Bovin

In Honor of Our Daughter Jenny
LouEtta Harris

In Honor of Rita Olatre
Rose Jones

In Honor of Robin Green
Kevin & Robin Green

In Honor of Rose Young
Rose Young

In Honor of Sara Cashen
Celia Baldwin

In Honor of Susan Mark
Naomi Feingold

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In Honor of Valerie Mcneal
Anna Guzman

Conquering Sjögren's
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Save the Date

World Sjögren's Day

July 23, 2026

One Community.
One Day. One Cause.

World Sjögren's Day

More details coming soon.

Thank you to our World Sjögren's Day Campaign Presenting Sponsor

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