

# DRY EYES? DRY MOUTH? OVERALL DRYNESS?

## Sjögren's Syndrome

Is an under-recognized autoimmune disease  
affecting an estimated 430,000 Canadians, mostly women.

Sjögren's (pronounced SHOW-grins) syndrome is a systemic disease in which the salivary, tear and mucous-secreting glands are preferentially attacked and damaged resulting in dry eyes, dry mouth or swollen salivary glands. Sjögren's can result in inflammation of the lungs, kidneys, GI system, blood vessels, liver, brain or thyroid gland. 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.

Although people's symptoms are variable,  
typical Sjögren's symptoms include:

- Dry, gritty, sore or burning eyes
- Eyes may be sensitive to sun or tear excessively
- Dry or burning mouth, yeast infections
- Difficulty speaking, chewing or swallowing
- Frequently using liquids to help swallow dry foods
- Increased dental decay
- Swollen salivary glands
- Fatigue
- Difficulty wearing dental apparatus
- Sore weak, painful muscles, joint pain
- Dry cough, dry nose
- Sore or cracked tongue
- Altered sense of taste or smell
- Dry skin and rashes
- Vaginal Dryness
- Headaches
- Digestive problems

The Sjögren's Society of Canada's mandate is:

- Patient support and education
- Professional and public awareness
- Support and raise funds for Sjögren's related medical research and a cure.

Sjögren's Syndrome affects:

- 1 in 70 Canadians, up to an estimated 430,000
- 9 out of 10 patients are women, people between 35–65 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 tissues diseases.

Is Sjögren's syndrome easily diagnosed?

NO; all symptoms may not be present at the same time and Sjögren's can mimic other diseases. On average, it can take 5–9 years to be diagnosed. A general lack of awareness about Sjögren's and frequently patients may have no obvious clinical signs, further complicates diagnosis.

Sjögren's  
Society of  
Canada

voicemail: 1-888-558-0950  
website: [www.sjogrenscanada.org](http://www.sjogrenscanada.org)

Working Together to Conquer this Serious Autoimmune  
Disease Affecting up to 430,000 Canadians