



SCLERODERMA

Friday, August 15, 2014

6:30 PM

At The Hard Rock Improv

5700 Seminole Way • Hollywood FL

Starring Dom Irrera



About Scleroderma – An Overview

Scleroderma, also known as systemic sclerosis, is a chronic connective tissue disease generally classified as one of the autoimmune rheumatic diseases, such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, and multiple sclerosis. The disease stems from the over-production of collagen in the body that creates hardening (sclerosis) of the skin (derma) and internal organs, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, and gastrointestinal track. The word “scleroderma” comes from two Greek words, “sclero” meaning hard, and “derma” meaning skin. Hardening of the skin is one of the most visible manifestations of the disease. Scleroderma may take several forms, and the severity, symptoms and complications associated with the disease vary considerably among patients.

It is estimated that approximately 300,000 people in the United States have scleroderma.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is scleroderma contagious?

Scleroderma is not contagious, nor is it infectious, cancerous or malignant.

How serious is scleroderma?

The symptoms of scleroderma vary greatly from individual to individual, and the effects of scleroderma can range from mild to life-threatening. The seriousness will depend on what parts of the body are affected and the extent to which they are affected. A mild case can become more serious if not properly treated. Prompt and proper diagnosis and treatment by qualified physicians may minimize the symptoms of scleroderma and lessen the chance for irreversible damage.

How is scleroderma diagnosed?

The diagnostic process may require consultation with rheumatologists and/or dermatologists, and require blood studies and numerous other specialized tests depending upon which organs are affected.

Who develops scleroderma, and when?

As with most autoimmune diseases, scleroderma primarily affects women more than men at a ratio of approximately 4 to 1. Most commonly, the onset of the disease happens between the ages of 25 and 55 years, but children and teens can also be affected.

What causes scleroderma?

The exact cause or causes of scleroderma are still unknown, but scientists and medical investigators in a wide variety of fields are working hard to make those determinations.



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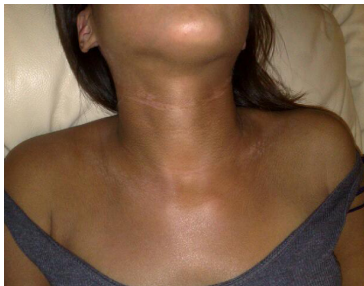


What is the treatment for scleroderma?

At the present time, there is no cure for scleroderma, but there are many treatments available. Some are directed at particular symptoms, such as kidney or lung involvement. Some treatments are directed at decreasing the activity of the immune system. Because there is so much variation from one person to another, depending on severity, progression, and the organ systems involved, there is great variation in the treatments prescribed.

What Scleroderma Looks Like

Jessica is a twenty-six year old woman in the prime of her life. She can no longer button her clothes, prepare her food or open a bottle of water. She is often asked insensitive questions about why she looks the way she does. The things in daily life that we take for granted are a never ending challenge for her. Her life is not what she dreamed it would be when she was a little girl.



The hardening of the skin that you see in these pictures doesn't reveal what is also happening to the body internally. You can help Jessica and the hundreds of thousands like her by being a sponsor of the Laughing Out Loud for Scleroderma Evening at the Improv at the Seminole Casino in Hollywood, Florida on August 15, 2014.