

## **Stevens-Johnson Syndrome**

Stevens-Johnson Syndrome (SJS), also called erythema multiforme major, is a skin disorder that can also affect the eyes. SJS is characterized by painful, blistering lesions on the skin and mucous membranes (moist tissues lining the mouth, throat, genitals, and eyelids). SJS can cause serious eye problems, such as severe conjunctivitis; iritis (inflammation inside the eye), corneal blisters and corneal erosions. It may also cause scarring of the conjunctiva resulting in lifelong problems with severe dry eyes. In rare cases, the ocular complications from SJS can be blinding.

Doctors are not certain why SJS develops. The most common inciting cause of SJS is an adverse drug reaction. Almost any drug--but particularly sulfa drugs--can cause SJS. The allergic reaction may be somewhat delayed, and not occur until 7-14 days after using it. SJS can also be preceded by a viral infection, such as herpes or the mumps. Treatment for the eye may include artificial tears, antibiotics, and/or corticosteroids. Approximately one-third of all patients diagnosed with SJS have a recurrence of the disease.

SJS occurs twice as often in men as women, and most cases appear in children and adults under 30, although it can occur at any age.

For more information on SJS:

### **Stevens Johnson Syndrome Foundation**

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