Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: https://reachmd.com/programs/living-rheum/detecting-sjogrens-disease-early-why-education-and-awareness-matters/36348/

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Detecting Sjögren’s Disease Early: Why Education and Awareness Matters

ReachMD Announcer:

You’re listening to *Living Rheum* on ReachMD. On this episode, we’ll hear from Dr. Nancy Carteron, who’s a Health Sciences Clinical Professor at the University of California Berkeley School of Optometry, and a Co-Investigator of the Accelerating Medicines Partnership Autoimmune and Immune-Mediated Diseases Program. She’ll be discussing the importance of Sjögren’s disease awareness.

Here’s Dr. Carteron now.

Dr. Carteron:

I think the main thing with helping awareness and diagnosing Sjögren’s is just more education and more awareness touchpoints both for healthcare providers and the general public. I think we need name recognition and awareness that it is one of the over a hundred different types of autoimmune diseases that we are aware of, and what its similarities are to other autoimmune diseases that people may be more familiar with—for example, multiple sclerosis or lupus—and just having it as part of the dialogue. But also outreach to other kinds of care providers—so for eye care providers that may be seeing dry eye patients, making them further aware of resources that they can connect their patients with to investigate whether they could have more of a systemic process or if their dryness is related to Sjögren’s or not. If somebody’s presenting to lung clinics, further educating our subspecialty colleagues of when to think about Sjögren’s or referral.

When the Sjögren’s Foundation did their first survey, the average time to get diagnosed was six years. With a lot of effort, in their more recent surveys, it’s really down to two years. But part of the problem is the healthcare system too. If somebody presents to a system, what touchpoint would they come into the system? What barriers might they encounter? If somebody doesn’t have access to insurance, that can be a further delay. I think it’s two-fold. It’s the system, still, and it’s not getting any better, but I think from the provider side, the main issue is just a lack of awareness and understanding. So I think with ongoing educational efforts, which are going to be fueled by if there are treatments that are going to be a labeled indication, then that’s an additional resource to help get information out—balanced information.

ReachMD Announcer:

That was Dr. Nancy Carteron talking about how we can improve the awareness of Sjögren’s disease. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Living Rheum* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!