Transcript Details
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Preventing Sjögren's Complications: The Importance of Timely, Accurate Diagnosis

ReachMD Announcer:
This is *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 wide-ranging impacts of Sjögren's disease.

Here's Dr. Carteron now.

Dr. Carteron:
If somebody's not recognized as having Sjögren's, they may have a delay in diagnosis. They then may have a significant organ involvement that is going to cause damage if it's not recognized earlier—specifically with involvement in the lung, there's a condition called interstitial lung disease, and if that's not recognized, it's possible that patients may go on with Sjögren's to have an interstitial lung disease with scarring that could have been managed and hopefully prevented earlier on. There are some unique things that happen in Sjögren's even under the lung involvement issue, where they can be more prone to develop large cysts in their lungs, and those could actually rupture.

There's an increased risk of lymphoma or lymphoproliferative diseases that occur in Sjögren's, and I think most healthcare providers are aware of that. It usually is more of a chronic illness, and so hopefully, there are not too many cases that go underdiagnosed with that. But there's a condition that can travel in that same family called amyloidosis, and that can also occur in the lung or in other conditions, so I think if you don't have the knowledge that you're dealing with a multisystem immune dysregulation disorder—one that can be connected with these disorders—it may delay the understanding in multiple different kinds of organs.

Another one that comes to mind is in the kidneys. People can have something called interstitial cystitis—chronic inflammation in the kidney. There's something that travels along with that called renal tubular acidosis, but for the patient, what they may experience is low potassium for no good reason. And if those dots are not connected, there's a delay in diagnosis, and people can have heart arrhythmias and other heart issues that could be corrected by replacing their potassium.

That's a couple of examples of how if you recognize Sjögren's, you're aware of the whole spectrum of things the patient that you're working with may have. And given what their unique things are, hopefully it will facilitate understanding maybe some of the symptoms that they're presenting with, as well as some of the lab abnormalities or imaging abnormalities that may have been uncovered in trying to figure out the explanation for a person's symptoms.

ReachMD Announcer:
That was Dr. Nancy Carteron talking about the potential harms of delayed diagnosis in patients with 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!

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