

## STEVENS-JOHNSON SYNDROME (SJS/TEN)

### SJS: WHAT IS IT?



Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SJS), and, Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TEN) another form of SJS—are severe adverse reactions to medication. Adverse drug reactions (ADR's) account for approximately 150,000 deaths per year in the U.S. alone; making drug reactions the fourth leading cause of death in the United States.

SJS is one of the most debilitating ADR's recognized. It was first discovered in 1922 by pediatricians A.M. Stevens and F.C. Johnson after diagnosing a child with severe ocular and oral involvement to a drug reaction

### EDUCATE BEFORE YOU MEDICATE

Almost any medication including over-the-counter drugs, such as Ibuprofen, can cause SJS. Most commonly implicated drugs are anti-convulsants, antibiotics (such as sulfa, penicillin and cephalosporin) and anti-inflammatory medications. In rare cases it can be caused by viral infections and mycoplasma pneumonia.

### WHO CAN GET SJS OR TEN?

Although SJS afflicts people of all ages, a large amount of its victims are children. More female cases have been reported than male, however it does not discriminate against anyone. Even pets can get it. The SJS Foundation hears from people around the world who suffer from SJS/TEN.

### KNOW THE SIGNS

Recognition of the early symptoms of SJS and prompt medical attention are the most invaluable tools in minimizing the possible long-term effects SJS may have on its victims.

### SYMPTOMS

- Rash, blisters, or red splotches on skin
- Persistent fever
- Blisters in mouth, eyes, ears, nose, genital area
- Swelling of eyelids, red eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Flu-like symptoms
- Recent history of having taken a prescription or over-the-counter medication



**Target lesions are not always seen in SJS!**

**IF YOU NOTICE TWO OR MORE OF THESE SYMSTOMS, CONTACT A PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY**

The Stevens Johnson Syndrome Foundation is a non-profit organization.

Your donations are tax deductible and will provide invaluable aid to a worthwhile cause.

To make a contribution to the SJS Foundation, please contact us at: Stevens Johnson Syndrome Foundation

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### RISKS

SJS and TEN are life-threatening reactions. If left untreated, they can result in death. Complications can include permanent blindness, dry-eye syndrome, photophobia, lung damage, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, permanent loss of nail beds, scarring of the esophagus and other mucous membranes, arthritis, and chronic fatigue syndrome. Many patient's pores scar shut, causing them to retain heat. These are just some of the side-effects that have been reported

### TREATMENT



First and foremost, affected persons must stop taking the offending drug immediately to prevent complications. Treatment for SJS is good supportive care. Because patients literally burn from the inside out, burn, infectious disease, ophthalmology and dermatology teams are recommended. IV fluids and high calorie formulas are given to promote healing. Antibiotics are given when necessary to prevent secondary infections such as sepsis. Pain medications such as morphine are administered to make the patient as comfortable as possible.

Most SJS patients can be managed in medical ICU or pediatric ICU. Patients with TEN should be treated in a burn unit. Amniotic membrane grafts can help to prevent permanent blindness. If used within the first 3 to 5 days of diagnosis. Immunoglobulin (IVIG) treatment can be beneficial for treating SJS/TEN.

### DRUG REACTIONS: A SERIOUS ISSUE

Drug reactions are one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Yet, less than one percent are reported to the FDA, because there is no mandatory reporting system in effect for postmarketing adverse drug reactions. Similarly, no one has an accurate count of the cases of SJS/TEN. Although SJS/TEN is listed as a rare disease, it may be more prevalent than previously thought

### WHO ARE WE

The SJS Foundation was founded in 1996 to be a resource to SJS victims and their families. Our mission is to provide support services, and compile and distribute valuable information about SJS to the public and medical professionals regarding treatments and therapies that may prove beneficial to SJS/TEN sufferers. We work to promote awareness about the signs of SJS/TEN so that a quick diagnosis can be made and the offending agent **stopped** as soon as possible.



Stevens Johnson Syndrome  
FOUNDATION

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