

Dermatomyositis

This rare disease is one where the immune system inflames the healthy tissues in the body. Persistent inflammation tends to weaken the muscles progressively. No one has an understanding as to what triggers the attack of the immune system. This condition can take on a number of different forms, most often it tends to develop slowly over the course of time and severity can range from mild to debilitating and even worse. Children and adults alike can both get it.

Dermatomyositis Anatomy

This particular form of myositis causes damage to both the skin and the muscle fibers. Similar to that of polymyositis, which weakens the muscles in a number of parts throughout the body, you end up with muscle weakness, fatigue and pain. Also, you will have a distinctive reddish, patchy rash along the cheeks, eyelids, upper chest, back, bridge of the nose, elbows, knuckles and knees. In certain cases, you might find a bunch of hardened bumps lying underneath the skin.



How to Treat Dermatomyositis:

1. Medication

Corticosteroids and various other drugs used for suppressing the immune system can end up slowing down the attack on all of the healthy tissues and improve the rash on the skin. Repeated blood tests will be conducted throughout the treatment program to check for myositis and monitor your movements. You might also want to employ the use of a non-steroid anti-inflammatory drug like ibuprofen or aspirin to provide you with pain relief, but this will all be done under guidance of your doctor.

2. Exercise

After the treatment from drugs goes into effect, a program that involves regular exercise as prescribed by the doctor will help to maintain an active range of motion in all of the legs and arms that are weakened. Physical therapy will also help to prevent the muscles from shortening. Adding in whirlpool baths, gentle massage and heat is important to the recovery process.

3. Light Therapy

Certain light therapies exist, such as low level LASER, UV and infra-red light. These can help the skin inflammation and redness.

4. Rest

Making sure that you get an adequate amount of rest is important to managing your degree of myositis. Taking frequent breaks throughout the day and limiting your range of activities is important to the healing process.

Tips:

- Pain in the middle parts of the shoulders and hips, as well as weakness, is often one of the first signs that you are suffering with myositis. It might become difficult to get up from a chair, climb stairs and even comb your hair. Becoming too tired to stand and walk go along with this condition.
- The condition can affect the muscles running along the throat and the front of the neck, which can make it difficult to swallow or speak (dysphagia). Once it affects the chest muscles and the lungs, you may have trouble trying to breathe.
- For those who have a certain type of this condition, you could end up with a rash on the knuckles, face and various other parts of the body.
- Common symptoms of the condition include swelling and pain in the joints.
- Maintain good nutrition, you must avoid processed foods that are pro-inflammatory.
- Even though there is no cure for the condition, aggressive and prompt treatment can help to reduce inflammation and prevent the muscles from getting worse.