



Eye on Health

Sorting Through the Symptoms of Sjögren's Syndrome

(NAPSA)—What if you were suffering from a disease that caused symptoms, including fatigue, chronic dry eyes and mouth, but you were told that it was just a part of getting older? For some women suffering from Sjögren's syndrome, that's exactly what happens.

Sjögren's syndrome is a chronic autoimmune disease affecting up to 4 million Americans, 90 percent of whom are women, with average age of onset being 40-50 years. Its symptoms are often considered "minor" or "vague," making diagnosis difficult. According to a recent survey among members of the Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation, the average time between the onset of first symptoms and diagnosis is 6.5 years.

Although once thought to be rare, current data suggests Sjögren's syndrome is one of the most common autoimmune diseases. In fact, it may be more prevalent in the United States than rheumatoid arthritis (2.1 million), lupus (1.5 million) and multiple sclerosis (400,000). Despite its prevalence, Sjögren's syndrome remains widely unknown. In fact, another survey uncovered that only 16



percent of women had ever heard of the disease.

Like all autoimmune diseases, there is no cure for Sjögren's syndrome. However, there are ways to manage the symptoms of the disease. Chewing sugar-free gum and drinking water can provide temporary relief from dry mouth symptoms. There are also prescription products approved by the FDA to treat dry mouth symptoms of Sjögren's syndrome. One example, Evoxac® (cevimeline HCl), is an FDA-approved product that has been proven effective in treating the dry mouth symptoms of Sjögren's syndrome. It is important that people suffering from Sjögren's syndrome continue to work with their doctors to manage their disease.

For more information, visit www.mydrymouth.com.

Note to Editor: **Safety Considerations**

You should not take Evoxac® if you have uncontrolled asthma, eye inflammation, narrow-angle (angle-closure) glaucoma or allergies to Evoxac®.

Before taking Evoxac®, tell your doctor if you have a heart condition, controlled asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, a history of kidney disease or gallstones, or if you are taking any heart medications, especially "beta-blockers." If you have any of these conditions, your doctor will monitor you under close medical supervision while you are taking Evoxac®.

You should be careful when driving at night or performing hazardous activities in reduced lighting while taking Evoxac®.

If you sweat excessively while taking Evoxac®, you may become dehydrated. To prevent this, drink extra water and talk to your doctor.

The most common side effects are excessive sweating, headache, nausea, sinusitis, upper respiratory infections, rhinitis and diarrhea.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are taking prescription or over-the-counter medications to avoid any possible drug interactions.

The safety and effectiveness of Evoxac® in patients under 18 years of age have not been established.

Special care should be taken if you are elderly.

Please see the Patient Information sheet and talk to your doctor.

For more information, please visit www.evoxac.com or www.daiichisankyo-us.com. Please see full prescribing information.