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Digestive System Involvement In Scleroderma

Background

While the most common cases of scleroderma would show different effects on the skin, it is followed by gastro-intestinal involvement that would account for 75 to 90% of all cases. Since the main symptom of systemic scleroderma would involve having limitations in the activities of the affected organs, people with gastro-intestinal involvement in scleroderma would experience mostly digesting problems that could interfere with their day-to-day life.

When the digestive system is involved in scleroderma, the walls of the affected area thicken as a result of it. With that, blood flow towards the affected organ is limited, thus limiting the functions of that organ. Persons with this can either have it in only one organ or more at the same time.

Who Can Have It?

There is no identified cause of scleroderma and with that; there is no accurate way of telling who can have it. Statistics however reported that it can happen to all people regardless of any classifications although it appears in some more than it does on others. Any form of scleroderma is more likely to appear in women than it is in men. It also appears usually between the ages of 30 and 60. It is inherent in the Native American Choctaw tribe, in African American Women and rarely occurs in Northern Asians.

Fortunately, most cases of scleroderma come in the mild form which would only affect the skin and although it can disable a patient, it tends not to be fatal most of the time. Some people however suffer from the severe form of it which is systemic sclerosis. Since this would affect organ functions by having the antibodies attack them, this is more fatal and quite difficult to handle.

Knowledge can give you a real advantage. To make sure you're fully informed about Scleroderma, keep reading.

How Is The Digestive System Affected By Scleroderma?

Scleroderma can affect organs in the digestive system just as it could affect any other organ. The weakening would usually begin in the esophagus then work its way down into the intestines. If the esophagus is affected by scleroderma, the patient will have difficulty having food pushed down which is a result of scleroderma interfering with peristalsis. After that, the next organ to be affected would usually be the stomach.

When scleroderma affects the stomach, this would usually involve digesting problems that could later result to further complications. This would happen especially when scleroderma would begin to develop in other digestive organs such as the intestines and the liver. While damages can be limited, effects of scleroderma cannot be reversed. However, treatment is possible.

How Can This Be Treated?

Scleroderma has no known cause and with that, there is no single cure that can reverse the effects of all cases of scleroderma. Treatment for scleroderma is case specific and the approach to treating it is more focused on limiting damage and relieving a patient from symptoms rather than attempting to completely remove scleroderma from a patient. Treatment can be in the form of medications, rehabilitation therapies or surgery which would depend on the case the patient is suffering.

This case of scleroderma is quite severe and could lead to a fatality however with careful medications; it is very possible for a case of gastro-intestinal involvement of scleroderma to be treated. Various medications such as anti-secretory agents, pro-motility agents and bacteria suppressing antibiotics have been proven to effectively treat some cases of gastro-intestinal involvement in scleroderma.

About the Author

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