

Dermatomyositis:

A Rare Autoimmune Disease Which Affects the Muscle and Skin

Disease Overview¹



DM is rare, idiopathic, and one of four forms of inflammatory myopathy. It is marked by muscle weakness and rash. People with DM often experience some pain, difficulty climbing stairs, difficulty swallowing, arthritis, and many have a variety of skin changes.

Cause²

The specific underlying **cause of DM remains unknown**. However, evidence suggests that genetic, immune, and environmental **factors could play a role**, including:



Affected Populations^{4,5}

Yearly incidence is between **1 to 10 people per million**, and the prevalence is between 1/50,000 and 1/10,000. It is most common in people who are 40 to 60 years of age.

DM is twice as common in women than in men. It is three times as common in Blacks than in whites, and more prevalent in Black women.

Common Complications²



Doctors Who Help Manage Care



Signs and Symptoms Can Appear Suddenly or Develop Gradually Over Time and Include^{2,5}

Distinctive, patchy, dark reddish/purple heliotrope rash on the:

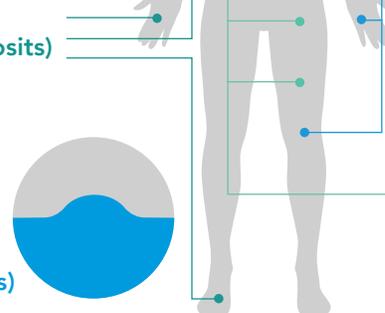
- Cheeks
- Bridge of nose



Heliotrope, itchy or painful rash or scaling on the:

- Eyelids
- Chest
- Face
- Back
- Forehead
- Knuckles
- Scalp
- Knees
- Elbows

Calcinosis (calcium deposits)



Panniculitis (painful lumps)

Muscle weakness in the:

- Hips
- Thighs
- Shoulders
- Upper arms
- Neck

How to Get Diagnosed³



Treatment and Disease Management⁴

There are limited effective therapies for DM. Current treatment options include **high-dose corticosteroids and other immunosuppressive agents** to help manage DM, but these can have serious side effects. Physical therapy and exercise may play a beneficial role in managing DM.

References:

1. rarediseases.org/rare-diseases/dermatomyositis/ | 2. mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dermatomyositis/symptoms-causes/syc-20353188 | 3. mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dermatomyositis/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20353192 | 4. orpha.net/consor/cgi-bin/OC_Exp.php?Expert=221 | 5. myositis.net/about-myositis/types-of-myositis/dermatomyositis/