



Pilot Research Grant:

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Project Title: Tear Biomarkers for Differential Diagnosis of Sjögren's vs. non-Sjögren's Dry Eye

Abstract

Sicca symptoms associated with Sjögren's include dryness of the mouth and eyes. Several non-Sjögren's conditions also result in dry eyes. However, at present no clinical tests available to eye doctors successfully distinguish Sjögren's related dry eye. This issue adds to the current delay experienced by Sjögren's patients in receiving accurate diagnosis and consequential prolonged suffering. Many complications involving several organs are possible in Sjögren's, including cancer, making early diagnosis critical. In fact, when patients with clinically significant dry eye were screened for Sjögren's, over 30% were newly diagnosed with Sjögren's. Therefore, the ability to identify Sjögren's-related dry eye can facilitate earlier diagnosis of Sjögren's. This study proposes to identify tear components that differentiate Sjögren's vs. non-Sjögren's dry eye. Such tear components can form the basis for a diagnostic test that helps clinicians detect Sjögren's earlier and manage treatment effectively to prevent development of serious complications.