April is Sjögren’s Awareness Month: Amplifying Patient Voices and Driving Awareness for an Underrecognized and Serious Autoimmune Disease

House resolution, national campaign, and patient voices shine a spotlight on one of the most prevalent-but misunderstood-autoimmune diseases.

Sjögren's disease is a serious, systemic autoimmune disease that affects millions of people, yet it remains widely misunderstood and underdiagnosed. While commonly known for causing dry eyes and dry mouth, Sjögren's is a complex disease that impacts the entire body and causes chronic pain, severe fatigue, and neurological symptoms. Additional complications can include damage to kidneys, lungs, liver, and the heart. Sjögren's can also lead to lymphoma. Despite being one of the most prevalent autoimmune diseases, many patients go years without a proper diagnosis, delaying essential care and treatment.

Representative Joe Morelle (D-NY) recently introduced **House Resolution 245**, recognizing the significance of Sjögren's disease as a serious and systemic autoimmune disease and expressing support for the designation of April 2025 as *Sjögren's Awareness Month*. This resolution, introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, underscores the need for greater awareness, highlights the estimated four million Americans living with Sjögren's, and calls for increased research funding to advance understanding and treatment.

To continue driving awareness and amplifying patient voices, the Sjögren's Foundation is dedicating April to its annual *Sjögren's Awareness Month* campaign, #ThisIsSjögren's. Throughout April, the Sjögren's Foundation will share patient stories that showcase the challenges, resilience, and realities of living with this complex disease.

How to Get Involved

The Sjögren's Foundation is calling on individuals and communities to take action and raise awareness:

- If you have Sjögren's, read and submit your story, which are shared daily, at **sjogrens.org/sjogrensmonth**
- Test your Sjögren's disease knowledge and learn the facts about this underrecognized disease by taking our Sjögren's knowledge quiz at **sjogrens.org/sjogrensmonth**

- Join the conversation on social media and share your story using #ThisIsSjögrens.
- Register for the National Patient Conference (April 11 & 12) at sjogrens.org/npc to connect with experts and learn the latest in Sjögren's research and care.
- Step Up for Sjögren's by participating in one of our Spring Walk for Sjögren's events. Learn more at **sjogrens.org/walks**.
- If you support a loved one with Sjögren's, download our flyer and share it in your community.
- If you are a healthcare provider, visit sjogrens.org and download our clinical practice guidelines, sign up for our *Sjögren's Quarterly* professionals newsletter and register for our Sjögren's CME courses.

Understanding Sjögren's Disease

- The official name of the disease is Sjögren's disease. The terms "syndrome," "primary," and "secondary" are no longer used, with "secondary Sjögren's" specifically discarded as it implied the disease was less significant than coexisting autoimmune conditions.
- It is a systemic, serious and prevalent disease in which the body's immune system attacks itself targeting glands and the nervous system. While hallmark symptoms include dry eye, dry mouth, fatigue and joint pain, Sjögren's is a systemic autoimmune disease, which means it can also attack any organ or part of the body. Neurological symptoms impact about 80% of patients.
- As many as four million Americans are affected by Sjögren's, making it more common than better known related diseases such as lupus and multiple sclerosis.
- On average, it takes 2.8 years for a patient to receive a diagnosis after they begin searching for one.
- Although the average age of diagnosis is over 40 years old, over 50% of patients believe they had Sjögren's much younger, including in childhood.

About the Sjögren's Foundation

The Sjögren's Foundation is the only national nonprofit dedicated to increasing education, awareness and research for Sjögren's disease. Founded in 1983, the Sjögren's Foundation has grown into a multi-faceted organization that has expanded its outreach, increased its funding for research, advanced patient and provider education, and continues to raise awareness for this common, yet complex disease. For more information, visit sjogrens.org.

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http://www.sjogrens.org

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