

Diseases that cause skin problems also can trigger serious neurological conditions

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Diseases such as lupus that cause rashes and other skin problems also can trigger migraine headaches, strokes and other serious neurological conditions, according to an article by Loyola University Medical Center physicians.

The article, published in the Handbook of Clinical Neurology, is written by senior author Jose Biller, MD and colleagues. Dr. Biller is chair of the Department of Neurology of Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.

"A variety of [neurologic diseases](#) have cutaneous [[skin](#)-related] manifestations," Dr. Biller and colleagues write. "These may precede, coincide with or follow the neurologic findings."

Some of the diseases described in the article that can cause both skin and neurological problems are:

Lupus. Women are 10 times more likely than men to get lupus, and the disease is especially prevalent during reproductive years. Between 70 percent and 80 percent of lupus patients experience skin rashes, including butterfly-shaped rashes on the face and rashes on areas exposed to sunlight, such as the face, arms, neck and hands.

Lupus can affect multiple organs and can cause a range of neurologic and psychiatric problems, including stroke, meningitis, [migraine headaches](#), movement disorder, seizures, anxiety, mood disorders and

psychosis.

Sjögren syndrome. Like lupus, Sjögren syndrome is an autoimmune disease, in which the body attacks its own tissues. The most common skin problem Sjögren syndrome causes is xerosis (abnormal dryness), resulting in dull, itchy skin with a fine, white bran-like scale.

Neurologic problems caused by Sjögren syndrome include hemiparesis (paralysis on one side of the body), aphasia (inability to talk or understand speech) and chorea (jerky, involuntary movements).

Parry-Romberg syndrome. In this progressive disease, the skin and soft tissues on half the face, usually the left side, deteriorate. The affected eye and cheek can become sunken and facial hair can turn white. The skin can become extremely dark, with patches of white skin lacking pigmentation.

Neurologic manifestations of Parry-Romberg syndrome include epilepsy, migraines, facial pain, involuntary contractions of chewing muscles, cognitive impairment and double vision.

The article is titled, "Acquired Neurocutaneous Disorders." In addition to Dr. Biller, co-authors are Jodi Speiser, MD, an assistant professor in the Department of Pathology and first author Amre Nouh, MD, who completed a neurology fellowship at Loyola and now is at Hartford Hospital.

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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