



Lichen sclerosis

widely spread - often unrecognized

www.lichensclerosus.ch
www.lichensclerosus.co.uk

The Lichen Sclerosus Association Switzerland was founded in 2013 by five courageous women affected by the disease. While its headquarters is in Switzerland, the Association is active throughout Europe and overseas, to raise awareness and give information about the taboo chronic skin condition affecting the outer genital area of women, men and children.

If it itches, burns or aches...

Do you often have an itching or burning sensation down below, or do you suffer from frequent aches similar to urinary tract infections? These symptoms could be signs of thrush or other bacterial infections. If they do not diminish after adequate (medical) treatment or if they keep recurring, ask your doctor about "lichen sclerosis".

Lichen sclerosis (LS) is a non-infectious inflammation of the skin of the outer genital area. This chronic auto-immune disease is relatively unknown; even doctors are often not aware of it or are not informed as to how to correctly treat patients. Statistically, 1 woman in 50 is affected; men and children are less likely to be affected. There are many unreported cases, not least because the subject has been taboo for decades.

Many women, men and children suffer for years, receiving the wrong treatment, feeling embarrassed to visit the doctor time and time again with the same symptoms, visiting numerous different doctors before finally receiving a diagnosis.

Precious time is lost as, with each flare-up of the condition, the degeneration of the dermal tissue advances.

If the disease goes untreated, the fusion of the female labia minora ('small lips') may cause the sealing of the clitoral hood and the covering of the clitoris. The fusion of the labia can lead to the narrowing of the vaginal opening (introitus); if untreated, the anatomy of the female genitals is often no longer recognisable (adhesions, stenosis, fusions). Sexual intercourse becomes a problem for many women. Furthermore, there is an increased risk of vulvar cancer in females, if the condition is not correctly treated.

In boys and men, along with the usual pathology, there is often a progressive narrowing of the foreskin and urinary tract opening.

As a result, surgery may become necessary for both genders, to reconstruct the genitals.

However, if LS is diagnosed at an early stage by a medical professional and treated along the official European and British LS guidelines, it is possible for affected patients to lead an almost symptom-free life without the need for surgery.

If you are symptom-free, be happy! Help us to raise the awareness of this destructive and taboo disease. You may help someone be diagnosed by discretely passing on this flyer, e.g. within your family and/or circle of friends.

THANK YOU!



An awareness campaign co-supported by Soroptimist clubs and the Union of Soroptimist Switzerland.