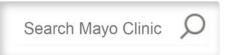




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By Chris Tighe at 1:03 pm, Oct 26, 2016

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By Mayo Clinic Staff

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Scleroderma (skleer-oh-DUR-muh) is a group of rare diseases that involve the hardening and tightening of the skin and connective tissues — the fibers that provide the framework and support for your body.

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In some people, scleroderma affects only the skin. But in many people, scleroderma also harms structures beyond the skin — such as blood vessels, internal organs and the digestive tract. Signs and symptoms vary, depending on which structures are affected.

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Scleroderma affects women more often than men and most commonly occurs between the ages of 30 and 50. While there is no cure for scleroderma, a variety of treatments can ease symptoms and improve quality of life.

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3 of 3