

**What is Scleroderma?**

Scleroderma is a chronic, often progressive, autoimmune disease like Rheumatoid Arthritis, Lupus and Multiple Sclerosis—in which the body's immune system attacks its own tissues. The disease, which literally means "hard skin" can cause thickening and tightening of the skin, as well as serious damage to internal organs including the lungs, heart, kidneys, esophagus, and gastrointestinal tract. For some individuals, Scleroderma is a nuisance—for others it is a life-threatening disease. An estimated 300,000 persons in the United States have Scleroderma; approximately four times more women than men develop the disease. The exact cause or causes of Scleroderma are unknown, and although medications can sometimes help, there is no cure yet.



**The Scleroderma Foundation  
Greater Chicago Chapter**  
203 North Wabash Street #2219  
Chicago, IL 60601



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### The Scleroderma Foundation

is a national organization for people with Scleroderma and their families and friends. It was formed January 1, 1998, by a merger between the west-coast based United Scleroderma Foundation and the east-coast based Scleroderma Federation.



## The Scleroderma Foundation

The Scleroderma Foundation has a three-fold mission of support, education and research

- **Support:** To help patients and their families cope with Scleroderma through mutual support programs, peer counseling, physician referrals, and educational information. To support people with Scleroderma and their families, there is a nation wide network of Chapters and Support Groups, a toll-free 800 line providing information and referrals to callers, a quarterly magazine, a variety of brochures, booklets, and newsletters and a growing website.
- **Education:** To promote public awareness and education through patient and health professional seminars, literature, and publicity campaigns. As part of the education mission, the Scleroderma Foundation also works with a Medical Advisory Board of internationally known Scleroderma experts, and a leading international public relations firm, Makovsky and Company.
- **Research:** To stimulate and support research to improve treatment and ultimately find the cause of and cure for Scleroderma and related diseases. The Foundation currently has a budget of over \$1 million per year for research funding—the single largest expense. In the case of research funds, the Foundation's Peer Research Review Committee, composed of medical experts on Scleroderma from around the world, helps determine which proposals will be funded by reading, analyzing and ranking all proposals received. The research proposals themselves are the end product of a process, which features international publicity through the proper channels for the availability of research funding from the Scleroderma Foundation, including detailed information on how to submit formal research funding requests.

To find out more about our national programs visit: [www.scleroderma.org](http://www.scleroderma.org)



## Greater Chicago Chapter

The Greater Chicago Chapter of the Scleroderma Foundation provides support services for Scleroderma patients and their families. Our local Board of Directors, Medical Advisory Board and many volunteers assist us in our work. We are a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the state of Illinois. We function within our chapter area, which includes all of Illinois, Northern Indiana, Southern Wisconsin, and a small corner of Iowa.

### Programs and activities of the Scleroderma Foundation, Greater Chicago Chapter include:

- Raising funds through many local special events and other programs, to support research to help find a cure for Scleroderma. Some of these events include walks, golf outings, black-tie events and other smaller fundraisers
- Informing and educating patients, health professionals and the public about Scleroderma and its consequences by hosting professional education seminars
- Providing referral information to Scleroderma patients and their families
- Maintaining a network of support groups, providing group meeting settings for Scleroderma patients
- Working with our local Medical Advisory Board to provide current medical information to patients
- Providing a bi-annual newsletter and maintaining a local website with current chapter information
- Advocating for the Foundation through our state and local representatives

To find out more about our chapter please visit [www.scleroderma.org](http://www.scleroderma.org) and click on "chapters"

### Contact Information

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