

SCLERODERMA – MORE THAN SKIN DEEP

Systemic Sclerosis is a chronic connective tissue condition generally classified as one of the autoimmune rheumatic conditions.



scleroderma **australia**

What is Scleroderma?

A condition of the immune system, blood vessels and connective tissue, scleroderma can attack many body systems or just a few. It is very hard to diagnose because each person may have a different combination of symptoms, and the condition progresses at different rates for everyone.

While some symptoms are visible, like hard puffy skin on the hands, Raynaud's, and tightened joints in systemic forms, the most serious symptoms are hidden, and the person with scleroderma may look quite well to outsiders. Inside that person, the lungs, heart, kidneys and gut are only some of the systems that may be affected. On the other hand, sometimes the face alters significantly although the organs are healthy, and facial changes may be hard to accept.

World Scleroderma Day–June 29

On June 29, we recognise the life and death of Paul Klee and all those who deal with the daily challenges of scleroderma.

We campaign for a world in which equal rights, treatments and care are offered to people with scleroderma, and in which such conditions are not forgotten, but afforded the consideration and attention of other more widely known conditions.

Having a condition that nobody has heard of is a lonely business.

So World Scleroderma Day was created to raise awareness of what it means to have this disabling condition.

June 29 is a day to recognise the strength and resilience of those who live with this condition and to demand equal treatment and equal care for people with scleroderma.

The gifted Swiss artist, Paul Klee, made painting his life's work, but it was strongly influenced by his illness, systemic scleroderma, as the painting chosen for World Scleroderma Day demonstrates.

See image on back of brochure

6,000

Scleroderma affects
6,000 Australians.



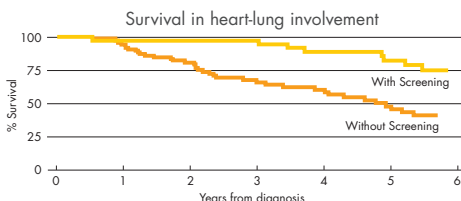
Scleroderma causes
hardening of skin and
failure of internal organs.



Scleroderma shortens life
expectancy, with 23 years of
life lost in women and 26 years
of life lost in men.



Scleroderma reduces quality of life and ability
to work. Individuals with scleroderma on
average retire 15 years before their healthy
population peers.



Individuals with scleroderma who are
screened for heart-lung complications at
specialised clinics are treated earlier and
have better outcomes.



Heart-lung involvement is
the major cause of premature
death in scleroderma.

\$64 M

Scleroderma is a costly condition, with
hospitalisations, emergency presentations,
medical and allied health consultations
costing around AUD \$64 million per year.

What Scleroderma Australia does?

Scleroderma Australia has been incorporated since 2005 to facilitate a national representative voice in supporting our scleroderma community across Australia. Delegates from the state associations make up our governing committee.

The purpose of our association is to:

- Coordinate and promote scleroderma awareness across Australia
- Increase community support and engagement for people with scleroderma and their families
- Advocate for people with scleroderma for improved patient outcomes
- Coordinate funding for scleroderma research across Australia
- Support state associations to provide successful and sustainable outcomes.

When joining a State Organisation/Association you are also supporting Scleroderma Australia with \$5 of your membership assisting our National Association.



Why we use the sunflower

To raise awareness about the condition, Scleroderma Australia has adopted the sunflower as the national icon. The sunflower is symbolic, as, like the sunflower which turns towards the sun for warmth, people with scleroderma are usually more comfortable in warmer weather.

Research and donations

Early diagnosis of scleroderma saves lives and leads to control of the condition.

Donations to Scleroderma Australia are tax deductible

Please complete and return this section to **PO Box 57, Melton VIC 3337**



☐ I would like to make a donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: (h) _____ (w) _____

Email: _____

Credit Card:

☐

Mastercard

☐

Visa

Credit Card No.

Expiry Date: ____ / ____ Amount: \$ _____

Cardholder's Name: _____

Signature: _____

OR

☐

Please find enclosed my cheque made payable to Scleroderma Australia

OR

Please deposit funds electronically using the below details

Bank Details for Scleroderma Australia Research Fund

BSB 032-060 **ACC** 293-438 **SWIFT CODE** WPACAU2S

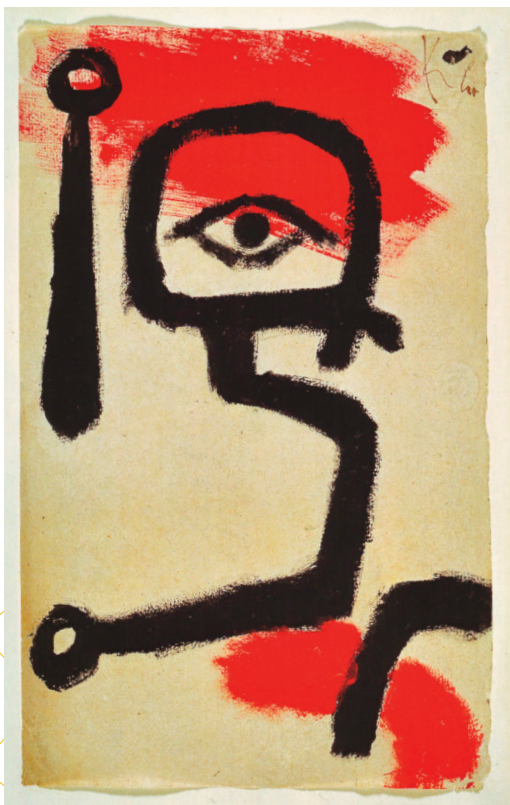
Please use your name as reference

☐

Yes, please email me a receipt
(please fill in email address above)

Scan QR
to donate





*Paul Klee, Kettledrummer 1940, 270
(coloured paste on paper on cardboard),
34.6 x 21.2 cm, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern,
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