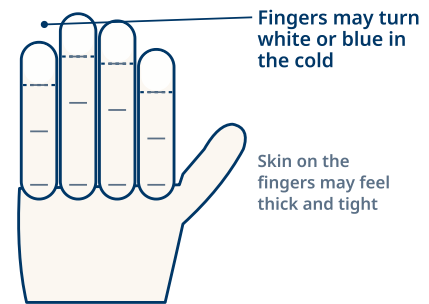


Scleroderma (Systemic Sclerosis)

What it is

Scleroderma is a disease that causes the skin to get thick and tight. In some people, it also affects blood vessels and organs such as the lungs, heart or stomach.



Common symptoms

- Raynaud's phenomenon: fingers turning white or blue in the cold
- Thickening and tightening of the skin of the fingers, hands or face
- Puffy fingers
- Heartburn or trouble swallowing
- Shortness of breath

Self-care tips

- Keep your hands and body warm. Wear gloves in the cold.
- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Do not stop them on your own.
- Keep all lab and follow-up visits.
- Stay active with gentle exercise, and rest during flares.

What to expect at GSMC

First visit: A rheumatologist reviews your symptoms, history and medicines, and examines your joints and skin.

Tests: Blood tests and imaging, as needed, help confirm the diagnosis.

Follow-up: Regular visits and lab checks help us adjust treatment over time.

When to call us

- Fingers that turn white or blue and stay that way, or skin sores on the fingers
- A flare that does not settle with your usual plan
- Fever or signs of infection while on your medicines
- New symptoms, such as a rash, chest pain or leg swelling

Call 911 for chest pain, trouble breathing, or signs of a stroke.

Call 732-202-3000

One number for all offices. Questions about this handout? We are glad to help.

Our 7 offices: Whiting · Toms River (Hooper Ave) · Brick · Barnegat · Manahawkin · Freehold · West Long Branch

gsmedicalcenter.org/services/rheumatology/conditions/scleroderma/



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This handout is general information and is not a substitute for medical advice.