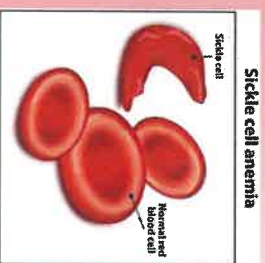


About Sickle Cell Disease

SICKLE CELL DISEASE

Sickle cell disease is an inherited condition that affects the red blood cells. It is characterized by the red blood cells becoming sickle shaped and stiff. Sickle cells are fragile and break up faster than the body can replace them, causing anemia. Persons with this disease experience periodic pain and other health problems. Sickle cell anemia is the most common type of sickle cell disease. Other types are hemoglobin SC disease, hemoglobin S/beta-plus thalassemia, and hemoglobin S/beta-zero thalassemia.



SICKLE CELL TRAIT

If a person has the sickle cell trait, he/she has the gene for sickle cell disease. The person does not have a disease and may not have any health problems associated with the sickle cell trait. Over 2.5 million Americans, mostly African-American, have the sickle cell trait. If both parents have the sickle cell trait, their children could have sickle cell disease.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Research has shown that sickle cell disease is a global health problem. It has been found in Africa, all of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, several Middle East countries, Canada, all the Caribbean islands, many South American countries, and in France, Belgium and the United Kingdom. More than 100,000 Americans, mostly African-American, have sickle cell disease, with two-thirds having sickle cell anemia. About 1,000 American babies are born with sickle cell disease every year. In America, about one in ten African-Americans and one in two hundred Caucasians have the sickle cell trait. Medical research concluded that sickle cell trait occurred as a natural mutation of the hemoglobin gene. Sickle cell trait serves as a protective mechanism against malaria. Malaria is a deadly disease found in countries along the equator. People with sickle cell trait are protected from malaria while those with sickle cell disease are susceptible to it. Over the years, those with the sickle cell trait migrated to other continents.

WHAT ARE PAIN EPISODES?

A person who has sickle cell disease can be a victim of what is known as a sickle cell pain episode or crisis. When a large number of sickle cells damage and plug blood vessels, it is difficult or impossible for the blood to circulate normally. This causes severe pain, which may occur in any part of the body.

A pain episode may require immediate medical attention and could be set off by an infection, fatigue, unusual stress, over-exertion, or high altitudes. The periodic obstruction of blood vessels damages many organs and may cause other health problems, such as leg ulcers (resulting from poor circulation), strokes, and decreased resistance to infections.



Fast Facts

A simple blood test can tell if you have the sickle cell trait.

Sickle cell disease is inherited.

If both parents have the sickle cell trait, there is a 25% chance (with each pregnancy) that the child will have sickle cell disease.

Monthly Activities

BOARD MEETINGS

Held the second Tuesday of each month
(Except July and December)

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Held the fourth Tuesday of every other month

GENETIC COUNSELING

Sickle Cell Disease and Trait Counseling
Individual, family or group counseling available
(by appointment only)

SICKLE CELL EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Presentations available to community groups,
agencies, health professionals, schools,
churches and others, as requested

For additional information on any of these
services or to make an appointment,
please contact our office at:

**Johnnie Ruth Clarke Health Center
at the Historic Mercy Hospital
1344 22nd Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33712
Phone: 727-896-2355**



Services Provided

Family Support Group
Scholarships
Educational Presentations
Genetic Counseling
Christmas Activities/Gifts
Referral Services
Wishing Fund
Emergency Family Assistance
Recreational Enrichment

How You Can Help

Our chapter is totally supported
by community donations.
In order to fund these programs
and implement new ones,
we need your monetary contributions.
Please consider becoming a member.

Types of Annual Memberships

Regular	\$ 10.00
Board Member	\$ 15.00
Associate Member	\$ 25.00
Honorary Member	\$500.00 (or more)

To make a donation,
please visit our website at
www.sicklecellstpete.org

Member of ...

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America
Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida
Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America

St. Petersburg Chapter, Inc.
"Break the Sickle Cycle"



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Website: www.sicklecellstpete.org



Our Mission is ...

- (a) To educate and improve public understanding of sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait; and
- (b) To enhance the quality of life for individuals affected with sickle cell disease by facilitating activities to lend economic, psychological, and social support.