



APS Foundation of America, Inc.

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Signs and Symptoms of Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome: Get in the Know and Get in the Flow!

The Antiphospholipid (APS) Antibody Syndrome Foundation of America, Inc. (APSFA) urges the public, as well as the medical community, to learn more about this rare disease. APS Awareness Month runs throughout June.

APS is an autoimmune disorder. Such illnesses occur when the body's tissues are attacked by its own substances. In APS, the body recognizes certain components of blood or cell membranes as foreign substances and produces antibodies--a specialized protein the body uses to prevent infection--against them. It is the major cause of strokes in persons under 40 years old, blood clots (thrombosis) -- which can lead to heart attack or stroke -- vision disturbances and repeated, otherwise unexplainable miscarriages.

While more general practitioners have become familiar with APS in the last few years, many physicians -- and most of the public -- are still unfamiliar with both its symptoms and the damage it can cause.

People who arrive at emergency rooms and doctor's offices with the following issues should be tested for APS:

- Heart attacks and strokes in those under 50
- Transient ischemic attacks, known as "mini-strokes." TIAs last 10 minutes or less and leave no permanent damage.
- Multiple miscarriages and stroke
- Blood clots in the lung (called pulmonary emboli) or deep veins in arms and legs (called deep vein thrombosis, or DVT)
- Diminishing mental alertness, such as loss of concentration, memory loss and difficulty with reading comprehension
- Migraine headaches
- Partial or total vision loss
- Dizziness
- Seizures

APS shares symptoms with more well-known disorders such as multiple sclerosis and lupus. Diagnosis and treatment delays can cause serious, sometimes fatal complications. A simple blood test can determine whether someone has APS.

The APS Foundation of America, Inc. is the only United States health agency dedicated specifically to bringing national awareness to APS. We are a volunteer-run, community-based, non-profit organization dedicated to spreading awareness and support to those with the disease.

Knowing more about APS can make all the difference. Get in the know and Get in the Flow!

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