

Churg-Strauss syndrome is a rare disorder that may affect multiple organ systems, especially the lungs. The disorder is characterized by the abnormal clustering of certain white blood cells (hypereosinophilia) in the blood and tissues, inflammation of blood vessels (vasculitis), and the development of inflammatory nodular lesions called granulomas (granulomatosis). Most affected individuals have a history of allergy. In addition, asthma and other associated lung (pulmonary) abnormalities (i.e., pulmonary infiltrates) often precede the development of the generalized (systemic) symptoms and findings seen in Churg-Strauss syndrome by as little as six months or as much as two decades. Asthma, a chronic respiratory disorder, is characterized by inflammation and narrowing of the lungs' airways, causing difficulties breathing (dyspnea), coughing, the production of a high-pitched whistling sound while breathing (wheezing), and/or other symptoms and findings. Churg-Strauss syndrome affects males and females in equal numbers, although some reports suggest that males may be affected slightly more often. The disorder can affect individuals of almost any age and has ranged from 15 to 70 years of age. Most cases occur in individuals between 30 and 50 years of age. The estimated mean annual incidence is 2.4 individuals per million. Some researchers believe that Churg-Strauss syndrome is underdiagnosed, making it difficult to determine its true frequency in the general population.