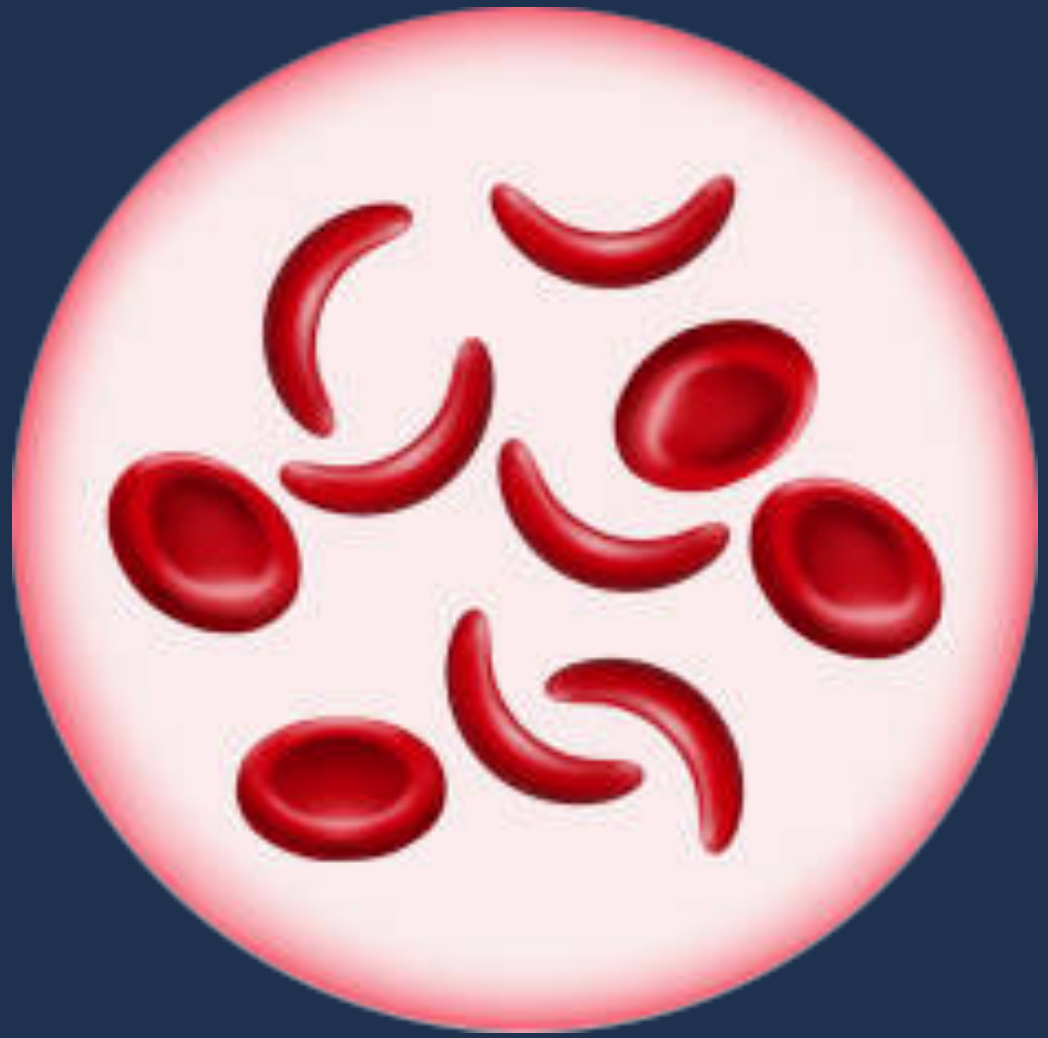
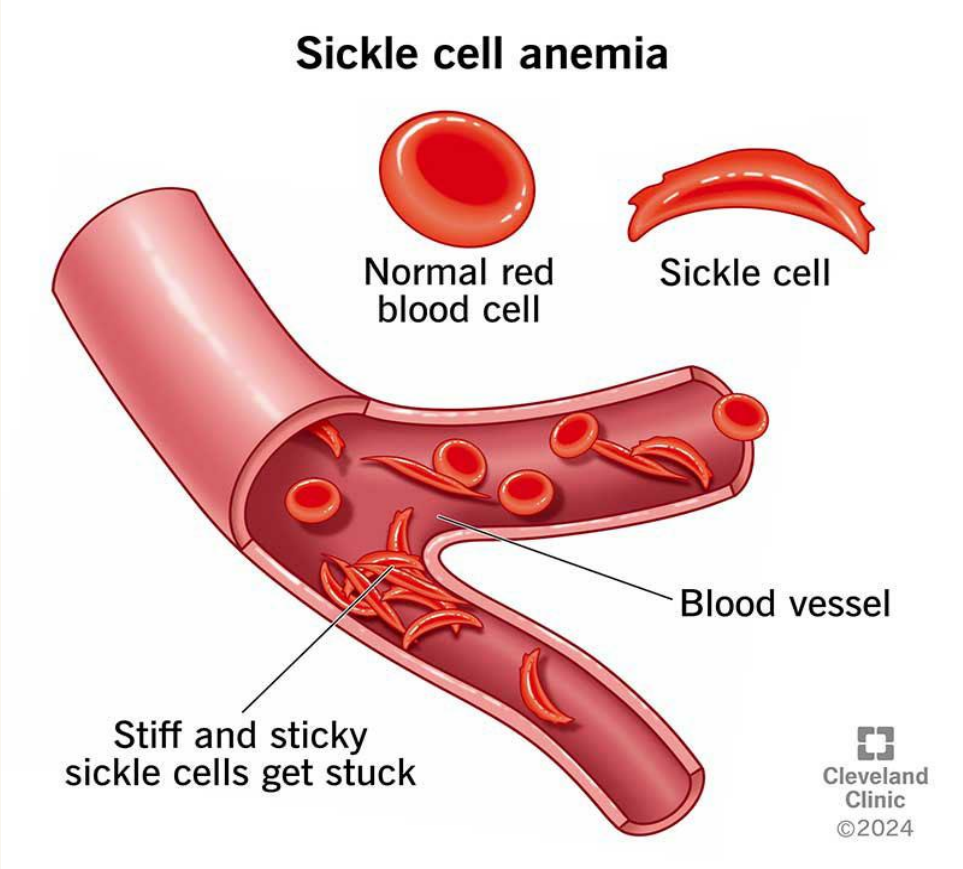
SICKLE CELL DISEASE



What Is Sickle Cell Disease?

A simple way to understand what happens in the blood

- Sickle cell disease (SCD) is an inherited blood disorder.
- A change in hemoglobin can cause red blood cells to become hard, sticky, and crescent-shaped.
- These cells can break down early and can block small blood vessels.
- Blocked blood flow can reduce oxygen reaching tissues and cause pain or organ damage.



Who Can Have It?

Genes matter—and sickle cell trait is not the same as sickle cell disease

Sickle Cell Disease

- A person inherits sickle-cell-related gene changes from their parents.
- Different forms of SCD exist; symptoms and severity can vary.

Sickle Cell Trait

- Usually does not cause the disease symptoms seen in SCD.
- A person with trait can pass the gene change to their children.

Knowing your status can help families make informed health decisions.

Signs, Symptoms & Warning Signs

Symptoms can differ from person to person

ANEMIA

Tiredness, weakness, dizziness, or shortness of breath can occur.

PAIN

Pain crises can happen when sickled cells block blood flow.

INFECTION

People with SCD can be at increased risk for serious infections.

OTHER SIGNS

Swelling of hands/feet, jaundice, or other complications may occur.

EMERGENCY: severe pain, chest pain/shortness of breath, high fever, or sudden stroke-like symptoms need immediate medical care.

Complications: Why Early Care Matters

Sickle cell disease can affect more than the blood

BRAIN
Stroke

LUNGS
Acute chest syndrome

KIDNEYS
Kidney problems

EYES
Vision problems

PAIN
Chronic or recurring pain

INFECTIONS
Serious infections

Treatment & Hope

There are more options today than there were in the past

- Hydroxyurea and other medicines can reduce complications for appropriate patients.
- Pain treatment, hydration, vaccinations, and infection prevention are important parts of care.
- **BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS may be needed for certain serious complications or prevention strategies.**
- Bone-marrow/stem-cell transplant may be an option for some patients.
- Gene therapies are now available for some people with SCD; eligibility depends on age and medical circumstances.

2026 update

The FDA expanded approval of Casgevy in July 2026 to include children age 2 and older with SCD and recurrent vaso-occlusive crises.

Treatment decisions belong with the patient and healthcare team.

What Can Our Congregation Do?

- Listen without judgment when someone says they are in pain.
- Support children and adults living with SCD without assuming what they can or cannot do.
- Encourage regular medical care and prompt attention to warning signs.
- Share reliable health information with family, friends, and the next generation.

DONATE BLOOD

Awareness • Compassion • Support • Early Care

References

Reliable sources for learning more

REFERENCES

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI/NIH). Sickle Cell Disease: What Is It?, Symptoms, Treatment, and Living With SCD. https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/sickle-cell-disease
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Casgevy and Lyfgenia: approved cellular and gene therapies for SCD.
- FDA, July 1, 2026. Expanded Casgevy approval to patients age 2+ with SCD and recurrent vaso-occlusive crises.

DONATE BLOOD

GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

SUNDAY, 09/27/26