

# Sjögren's syndrome and the epithelial target: A comprehensive review

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The most difficult component in our understanding of human autoimmunity remains a rigorous dissection of etiological events. Indeed, the vast literature on autoimmune diseases focuses on the inflammatory response, with the hope of developing drugs that reduce inflammation. However, there is increasing recognition that understanding the immunobiology of target tissues will also have direct relevance to disease natural history, including breach of tolerance. Sjögren's syndrome is essentially an epitheliitis and there are major changes to normal architectural salivary organization. We propose that loss of homeostasis is the initial event that precipitates inflammation and that such inflammatory response includes not only the adaptive response, but also an intense innate immune/bystander response. To understand these events this review focuses on the architecture, phenotype, function

and epithelial cell organization. We further submit that there are several critical issues that must be  
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