

Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a common type of skin disease affecting the life cycle in the skin cells. It causes the cells to rapidly build up along the surface of the skin, which forms a thick, silvery scale and dry, red, itchy patches that can be quite painful.

Psoriasis is a long-term, persistent disease. You might have periods where the symptoms improve or go into what is known as remission, which can alternate with periods where the condition actually worsens.

For some individuals, psoriasis is simply a nuisance. For others, it can become quite disabling, especially when it is associated with arthritis. Psoriasis can occur on one part of the body, but it can cover the majority of the body.

Even though there isn't a cure, there are treatments available that can provide you with a significant amount of pain relief. Certain lifestyle measures, such as cortisone cream and natural sunlight in moderation can all help to improve your symptoms.

Psoriasis Anatomy

The skin is actually the largest of all organs in the body, comprising a total of roughly 20 square feet. It protects you from the elements and microbes, permits sensations of heat, cold and touch and helps to regulate the body temperature. The color of the skin is created from specialized cells, which help to produce melanin. Melanocytes are all found in the epidermis layer of the skin.

Psoriasis can be linked with an arthritis, known as psoriatic arthritis that typically develops in people with psoriasis. It is thought that the immune system attacks the joints as well as the skin cells in the body. The most common joints affected by psoriatic arthritis are hands, feet, elbows, knees and spine.

How to Treat Psoriasis:

1. Vitamin D

A synthetic form of Vitamin D can help slow down skin cell growth. The solution can either be used alone for treating moderate to mild psoriasis or in combination with other medications.

2. Topical Corticosteroids

These power anti-inflammatory medications are the most commonly prescribed for treating mild to moderate cases of psoriasis. They help to slow the cell turnover by suppressing the immune system, which can help to relieve itching and inflammation. The treatment strength can vary significantly, so the one you are prescribed will be based upon your individual condition.

3. Sunlight

UV rays are too short for the human eye to see. When your skin is exposed to these rays, the activated T cells in the skin will die. This helps to slow the skin cell turnover and reduce inflammation and scaling. Brief exposure on a daily basis will help to improve the condition, but don't overdo it as that could only make the problem worse.

4. UVB Phototherapy

Controlled doses of UVB light using an artificial source can also help to improve mild to moderate symptoms. It can be used for treating a single patch, widespread psoriasis and even those that are resistant to general topical treatments.

Tips:

- Take a bath daily. Bathing daily will help to remove any scales and calm the inflamed skin.
- Use a moisturizer. Blot your skin after bathing. Apply a heavy moisturizer while the skin is still moist.
- Cover any affected areas overnight. To help improve scaling and redness, apply an ointment to the skin and wrap it in plastic overnight.
- Expose the skin to small amounts of sunlight. Controlled sunlight will help to improve lesions.
- Avoid drinking a lot of alcohol. Alcohol consumption will decrease how effective treatment can be.