

Psoriasis: Common Skin Disease

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Psoriasis is a skin disease that causes red, itchy scaly patches, most commonly on the knees, elbows, trunk and scalp. Psoriasis is a common, long-term (chronic) disease with no cure. It tends to go through cycles, flaring for a few weeks or months, then subsiding for a while or going into remission. Treatments are available to help you manage symptoms. And you can incorporate lifestyle habits and coping strategies to help you live better with psoriasis.

There are five types of psoriasis

Plaque psoriasis is the most common type of psoriasis. It is estimated that 80 percent of people with the condition have plaque psoriasis. It causes red, inflamed patches that cover areas of the skin. These patches are often covered with whitish-silver scales or plaques. These plaques are commonly found on the elbows, knees, and scalp [1].

Guttate psoriasis is common in childhood. This type of psoriasis causes small pink spots. The most common sites for guttate psoriasis include the torso, arms, and legs. These spots are rarely thick or raised like plaque psoriasis.

Pustular psoriasis is more common in adults. It causes white, pus-filled blisters and broad areas of red, inflamed skin. Pustular psoriasis is typically localized to smaller areas of the body, such as the hands or feet, but it can be widespread.

Inverse psoriasis causes bright areas of red, shiny, inflamed skin. Patches of inverse psoriasis develop under armpits or breasts, in the groin, or around skinfolds in the genitals.

Erythrodermic psoriasis is a severe and very rare type of psoriasis. This form often covers large sections of the body at once. The skin almost appears sunburned [2]. Scales that develop often slough off in large sections or sheets. It's not uncommon for a person with this type of psoriasis to run a fever or become very ill. This type can be life-threatening, so individuals should see a doctor immediately.

Up to half of people with skin plaques have psoriasis of the nails as well. This makes your nails look yellowish-red. Your nails may also crumble, become pitted, or get grooved lines. Nearly everyone with psoriasis of the nails also has psoriasis somewhere on the skin.

Some people with psoriasis may get psoriatic arthritis. It causes swelling and pain in your joints and can make it hard to use them for everyday tasks. You can get psoriatic arthritis at any age, but it's most common between 30 and 50.

If you have psoriasis, your immune system mistakenly attacks healthy skin cells, as if it were fighting an infection. Your body responds by making new skin cells every few days instead of the usual 4 weeks. Those new skin cells build up on your body's surface and form a rash.

REFERENCES

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