

PSORIASIS FACT SHEET

WHAT IS PSORIASIS?

- Psoriasis is a chronic disease of the immune system that speeds the growth cycle of skin cells and, in plaque psoriasis, results in the formation of red patches, thick flaky lesions and itchy spots on the surface of the body.¹
- Psoriasis is a noncontagious, lifelong condition with no known cure.¹
- Plaque psoriasis is the most common form of the disease, affecting about 80 percent of psoriasis patients. It appears as red, raised inflamed lesions covered with silvery-white, flaky scales, which may be itchy and can crack and bleed.^{2,3}
- Plaques can appear anywhere on the body, but most commonly appear on the elbows, knees, scalp and lower back.⁴
- Studies show that up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis develop psoriatic arthritis, an inflammatory disease that causes pain, as well as stiffness and swelling in and around the joints.^{5,6}

HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE WITH PSORIASIS?

- According to current studies, as many as 7.5 million Americans – approximately 2.2 percent of the population – live with the disease. Nearly a quarter of these have moderate to severe forms of the condition. The National Psoriasis Foundation defines psoriasis affecting 3 percent to 10 percent of the body as moderate; affecting more than 10 percent as severe.⁵
- Psoriasis occurs nearly equally in men and women.⁴ The onset is typically at young adulthood, but the disease can develop at any age.⁷
- According to a National Psoriasis Foundation survey, people living with psoriasis have reported that psoriasis is a problem in everyday life.⁸
- According to a National Psoriasis Foundation survey, more than half (57%) of respondents (n=426) reported that their psoriasis impacts their self-esteem.⁸

CAUSES

- While the exact cause of psoriasis is not known, scientists believe that onset results from a genetic predisposition combined with external “triggers” such as stress, injury to the skin and certain medications.⁹
- These triggers are not universal, and something that causes one person’s psoriasis to “flare up” may not be a trigger for someone else.⁹

TREATMENT

While there isn’t currently a cure for psoriasis, there are treatments available to help manage this chronic condition. After receiving a diagnosis, the treatment prescribed by a dermatologist will depend on the type and severity of the condition. No two cases are the same, so it’s important to work with a dermatologist who has experience in managing the disease and can create a customized treatment plan.¹⁰

TYPES OF PSORIASIS³

Plaque: Raised, inflamed, red lesions covered by silvery white scales, typically found on elbows, knees, scalp and lower back.

Guttate: Small, red, individual spots, most often found on the torso, arms and legs. Usually not as thick as plaque lesions.

Inverse: Bright red, shiny, smooth lesions typically found in the groin area, armpits and skin folds.

Pustular: White blisters of noninfectious pus surrounded by red skin, it may either be localized to certain areas of the body, such as the hands and feet, or cover most of the body.

Erythrodermic: A particularly inflammatory form of psoriasis affecting most of the body surface and causing periodic, widespread, fiery redness of the skin and the shedding of scales in sheets.

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