

Fast Facts

Psoriasis

- Condition that occurs when the life cycle of the skin cells speeds up resulting in them rapidly building up on the surface
- Cause is unknown, but thought to be related to a problem with the person's immune system that is triggered by environmental factors
 - Immune system has many different white blood cells. One type, T cells, normally move throughout the body protecting you from foreign objects, like viruses or bacteria
 - If you have psoriasis, T cells attack healthy skin by mistake, which activates an increase in healthy skin cell production, neutrophils (another type of white blood cell) and more T cells.
- Creates an ongoing cycle, which results in the new skin cells moving to the outermost layer of skin too soon (in days rather than weeks)
 - Can occur anywhere on your body and be small or large in size
 - Several types
- Can go through cycles where it flares up for a few weeks/months and then subsides for a period of time (some individuals experience complete remission)

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thick, silvery scales on the skin surface -Redness to the area -Dry/cracked skin that bleeds -Itching/burning/soreness to the area -Thickened/pitted/ridged nails -Swollen/stiff joints 	<p><i>Goal:</i> Reduce inflammation and clear the skin</p> <p><i>Topical medications:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Topical corticosteroids -Vitamin D analogues -Topical retinoids -Calcineurin inhibitors -Salicylic acid -Coal tar -Moisturizers <p><i>Light therapy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sunlight -Broadband ultraviolet B (UVB) -Narrow band UVB -Goeckerman therapy -Psoralen plus ultraviolet A (PUVA) <p><i>Systemic medications:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Retinoids -Methotrexate -Cyclosporine -Drugs that alter your immune system (or biologics) 	<p><i>Manage flare ups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Figure out triggers and avoid them -Take a daily bath using lukewarm water and mild soaps (adding bath oil, colloidal oatmeal or Epsom salts can provide added relief) -Apply a heavy, ointment-based moisturizer after the bath while skin is still moist -If you live in an area that experiences cold, dry weather, you'll need to apply moisturizer several times a day -Expose affected areas to sunlight for brief periods (clear this with your doctor first and apply sunscreen to the rest of your skin) -Avoid drinking alcohol and, if you do drink, don't drink a lot -If you're feeling self-conscious, you can cover it up with cosmetic products (test the products on your skin first and to not use them on any open sores)

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