

Psoriasis

What is it?

Psoriasis is a common skin condition that can start at any age and tends to persist. It is more common in people who have family members with psoriasis. Psoriasis usually causes a red scaly rash that is most common over the scalp, elbows and knees; but it can affect any part of the skin. When psoriasis clears, it often leaves brown or pale marks that take several months to fade. Psoriasis can be mild through to severe, and can sometimes affect the nails and joints (psoriatic arthritis). It is not an infection so it cannot be passed to other people through contact.



What can I do to help my psoriasis?

- ✗ Try to avoid skin injury as psoriasis is more likely to develop in injured skin. This includes sunburn, cuts/scratches, and picking/scratching at psoriasis scale.
- ✓ Gentle sun exposure can help psoriasis. Aim for up to 20 minutes, up to 3 times per week, when the UV index is 3 or less (use the SunSmart app).
- ✓ Try to reduce stress and worry.
- ✓ Aim for a healthy lifestyle and healthy weight, by exercising regularly and eating healthy foods.
- ✓ Let your doctor know if your psoriasis gets worse with throat infections or certain medications.



Your recommended products:

Psoriasis

What can I do to help my psoriasis?

- ✓ **Wash with plain water or a soap-free wash** (this can also be used for hair washing). Don't use products that dry the skin, including soap, shower gel or bubble bath.
- ✓ **Moisturise the whole body and face each day.** A thick moisturiser is best, like a cream or ointment. It is best to put moisturiser on straight after washing, on to damp skin.
- ✓ **If you get scalp psoriasis, it helps to use a medicated shampoo regularly 1-2 times per week.** Try to leave the shampoo on your scalp for 3-5 minutes before rinsing off.



What skin treatments should I put on my psoriasis?

SCALP

FACE

EARS / NECK / SKIN FOLDS

ARMS / LEGS / BODY

HANDS / FEET



* Use your prescription treatments every day until the psoriasis clears.

* More severe psoriasis may need other treatments, such as phototherapy, tablets, or injections.



Want more information? Visit dermnetnz.org or dermcoll.edu.au/a-to-z-of-skin

This factsheet was developed as part of the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin Project.

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