

Psoriasis



What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a skin condition that causes red patches of skin covered with white scales. These patches can appear anywhere on your body. Psoriasis also often runs in the family. There are very good treatments available for Psoriasis.

How do you get psoriasis?

A genetic predisposition is certainly a major factor. If you have psoriasis, then someone else in your family often has this predisposition as well. Psoriasis can spontaneously occur at any age. Sometimes psoriasis can be triggered by:

- skin damage
- infections
- medicine use
- stress

What does psoriasis look like?

Plaque Psoriasis

This is the most common form of psoriasis. You will have red patches on your skin covered with scales. The patches are not all the same size. The psoriasis patches can be found anywhere on your body. Usually the patches are on your elbows, knees, head, on the lower part of the back, on the inside of the hands and at the bottom of the feet. Sometimes, psoriasis can also occur on the genitals.

Psoriasis Guttata

With psoriasis guttata, a rash of small psoriasis patches develops in a short period of time, usually after a throat

infection.

Psoriasis Inversa

Psoriasis can also develop in the folds of your body, such as in the groin area, the navel, the armpits, between the buttocks and the breasts. If you have psoriasis in these areas, it is called psoriasis inversa. These areas usually do not have any scaling.

Nail Psoriasis

Sometimes your nails can also be affected by psoriasis. You will see pitting, discolouration (yellow-brown spots) and nail bed separation.

What are the symptoms of psoriasis?

Psoriasis is sometimes itchy or painful. Your joints can also get inflamed, especially the joints of your hands and feet (psoriatic arthritis). Some people with psoriasis feel ashamed. It is important that you talk with your doctor if you are affected by this.

Is psoriasis contagious?

No, no form of psoriasis is contagious.

How does your doctor know if you have psoriasis?

Your doctor can see from the patches on your skin whether you have psoriasis. Sometimes your doctor will want to confirm that it is not a different type of skin condition and in that case, your doctor will take a small skin sample (biopsy). Local anaesthetic will be used before removing a skin sample.

What are the treatments for psoriasis?

There are three different options:

1. Cream, ointment or liquid
Your doctor will prescribe a cream, ointment or liquid that you need to apply to the psoriasis patches. Usually you need to do this once or twice a day. Examples are vitamin D cream, corticosteroids (hormone ointments - see the leaflet "Corticosteroids for the skin"), tar ointments and Dithranol cream.
2. Light therapy
This is a treatment with UV light, usually UVB light. Sometimes you will also get medication that you must take or you might need to take a certain type of bath (PUVA treatment). Light therapy is the result of the experience that many people with psoriasis have fewer complaints in the summer and after a holiday in the sun. Sunbeds do not work.
3. Tablets or injections
You will receive medicines from your doctor - for example, tablets or capsules, which you will have to take. You could also be prescribed medicine that is injected into your skin. Examples are methotrexate, cyclosporin, acitretin, fumarates and biologics.

What else can you do?

You can keep your skin supple by applying a skin care cream to your skin. As a result, you will suffer from fewer psoriasis patches.

Can psoriasis be cured or will you always suffer from it?

There is no treatment that can guarantee that psoriasis will never come back. Sometimes you may suffer from psoriasis more than at other times. Treatment will make the

psoriasis a lot better. If you stop the treatment, the patches on your skin will almost always return after a few weeks or months. But it is also possible for psoriasis to stay away for years!

Would you like more information?

If you want to know more about psoriasis, please visit the Huidfonds website: www.huidfonds.nl. This website answers 118 questions about psoriasis.

Patients Association

There are two patients associations for psoriasis patients:

- Psoriasis Vereniging Nederland: www.pvnnet.nl
- Psoriasis Federatie Nederland: www.psoriasis-fn.nl

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