

How well is
your treatment
working?

P. 21

Simple tips
to look your
best—and
feel your best!

P. 22

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Living



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**“I’m
comfortable
in my own
skin again!”**

Plaque Psoriasis

When his plaque psoriasis kept him up at night, John Williamson took control by finding a dermatologist who specializes in his condition. The result? Clear skin and carefree family time, thanks to his new biologic.

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TCO23

Cover photo by Leah Hulst Photography

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MEDICAL REVIEWER



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Look your best —and feel great!

Better sleep.
Increased energy.
Boosted confidence.
Today's treatment options give you greater control over plaque psoriasis.

Tari M. is feeling the sun on her skin again and she couldn't be happier. That's because, for the first time in years, her skin isn't covered in the itchy, scaly patches caused by plaque psoriasis.

"It started with my scalp," Tari recalls. "I was getting these greyish, crusty spots all over, and I assumed I was having a reaction to one of my hair products. But switching those didn't do anything. And by then the patches were showing up on my elbows and the backs of my knees."

Tari made an appointment with her allergist, thinking maybe the patches were connected with her food allergy issues.

"She told me it wasn't a food issue—I had plaque psoriasis. Then she referred me to a dermatologist, who confirmed it."

Tari was first prescribed topical medications, "and those didn't

help at all." Next up, some oral anti-inflammatories, which only helped a little.

Tari's doctor then suggested she try an injectable biologic that would be administered in the office every three months. To Tari's relief, her plaques began to clear within just a few weeks of the first dose.

"After about nine months, I'd say my skin is about 90% clear again!" she marvels. "I'm so grateful I could cry!"

Get the upper hand

Like Tari, you may find it frustrating to deal with your plaque psoriasis. But as one of the eight million Americans living with it, you are far from alone. Luckily, there's much you can do.

Take a moment to read through this guide; arming yourself with knowledge can help you and your care team zero in on a treatment plan that can clear your skin.

A closer look at plaque psoriasis

Plaque psoriasis is the most common form of psoriasis. It happens when your im-

mune system—which normally fends off germs—goes into overdrive and attacks healthy skin cells, causing skin to become inflamed and produce new skin cells at an accelerated rate. Normally, the body takes about a month to produce new skin cells, but in psoriasis, the process can take just three to four days. The result is a buildup of itchy, flaky skin called plaques.

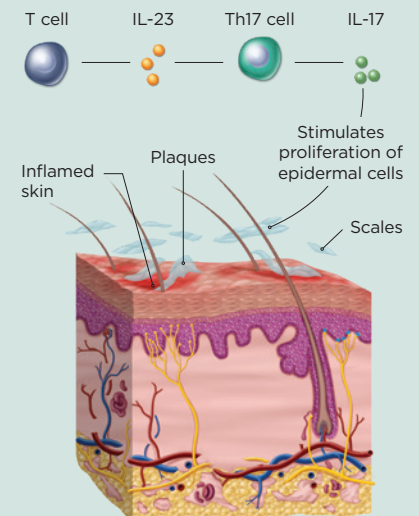
Who gets it?

According to the American

Academy of Dermatology, about 80% to 90% of people living with psoriasis have the plaque form. Researchers believe some people are born with a genetic predisposition to the condition and develop psoriasis after exposure to a certain trigger—this can be anything from an infection like strep to a stressful event, such as a job loss or move.

Psoriasis often develops between the ages of 15 and 35, though it could come on at any age. ▶

Plaque psoriasis on skin



How is it diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will examine your skin and nails. Occasionally, they may order a biopsy. Your dermatologist will determine the type and severity of your psoriasis, ranking it mild, moderate or severe. One way to assess that is by looking at how much of your body is covered:

- **Less than 3%** = mild
 - **From 3% to 10%** = moderate
 - **More than 10%** = severe
- They may also use the Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) to measure the severity and extent of your psoriasis on a scale from 0 to 72, where a score higher than 10 suggests severe psoriasis.

How is it treated?

Your plan of attack may include any of the following methods:

1. **Applying topical treatments.** These medications, available as creams and ointments, help reduce inflammation, itching and scaling. Examples include tapinarof, roflumilast, calcipotriene, coal

tar, corticosteroids, retinoids and salicylic acid.

2. **Exposing your skin to light.**

Your dermatologist may suggest phototherapy—the use of ultraviolet light to treat your skin. This therapy helps to clear up plaques and reduce inflammation. Phototherapy involves exposing your skin to a specialized lamp in your doctor’s office or to a prescription home phototherapy unit. Light treatments typically happen a few times a week for three months or longer. Examples include ultraviolet B (UVB), psoralen + ultraviolet A (PUVA) and excimer laser. *Note:* Tanning beds should not be used as a substitute for phototherapy.

3. **Exploring body-wide (systemic) medication options.**

These medications slow skin cell growth and reduce inflammation. Examples include cyclosporine, methotrexate and biologic drugs that block messengers such as tumor necrosis factor- α , interleukin-17A and interleukin-23. Biologic therapies and other treatments impacting the immune system are some of the breakthrough therapies for plaque psoriasis. ●



Meet your psoriasis care team

These are the healthcare professionals who can help you manage your plaque psoriasis:

Primary care physician (PCP):

This MD checks your overall health and likely diagnosed your psoriasis. They may refer you to a dermatologist or other specialist for treatment.

Dermatologist:

This physician specializes in treating conditions affecting the skin, hair and nails.

Dermatology nurse:

This nurse has received additional training in dermatology and may work with your doctor on your care.

Physician associate (PA)/ Nurse practitioner (NP):

These healthcare professionals can help manage your psoriasis and prescribe medications.

Psychiatrist/psychologist/social worker:

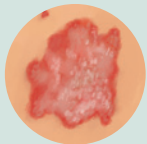
Professionals who can help you deal with psychological and social issues related to your psoriasis.

Dietitian/nutritionist:

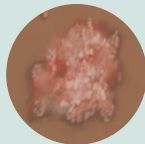
A nutrition expert who can help you identify foods that may trigger or help combat inflammation.

How plaque psoriasis appears on different skin tones

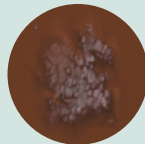
You might know about the plaques and scales that come with psoriasis, but did you know that they develop in different colors depending on a person’s skin tone? Here’s how they look on...



LIGHT SKIN
Plaques can appear as raised patches with silvery scales.



MEDIUM SKIN
Plaques can appear as raised salmon-colored patches with silvery white scales.



DARK SKIN
Plaques can appear as raised purple or dark brown patches with gray scales.

Another feature unique to darker skin tones?

Dark patches of skin that remain even after the psoriasis clears. “Patients with dark skin often heal with what is called ‘post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation,’” says Dr. Mark Lebwohl, MD, who adds you can discuss treatment options for hyperpigmentation with your care provider.

Considering biologics? HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

When you have plaque psoriasis and feel frustrated by stubborn plaques, it might be time to discuss more aggressive treatment. Unlike other treatments, biologics help clear your skin by zeroing in on the immune system malfunction behind your flares. To learn more, read on.

1. WHAT ARE BIOLOGICS?

A biologic response modifier, or biologic, is a protein-based drug made from living cells cultured in a laboratory. Biologics inactivate the inflammatory molecules that are the culprits behind your skin lesions. Some biologics are more targeted than others, and whether you may benefit from a more targeted or less targeted medication varies from patient to patient.

2. HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M A CANDIDATE?

Take a moment to think about your current regimen and how well it's working for you. For example, is your skin clear or do you have significant patches? Or maybe you have just a few plaques—but they're enough to make you feel self-conscious and cause you to say no to activities you enjoy. And do you have other conditions like obesity or a history of cancer that may impact the selection of a biologic therapy? Discussing concerns like these with your doctor can help you determine whether biologics may be the next step for you.

Note: People who have compromised immune systems or those with infections, such as tuberculosis or fungal infections, may not be able to take a biologic or may require pretreatment of their underlying condition.

3. HOW ARE BIOLOGICS ADMINISTERED?

Biologics are either injected under the skin or given intravenously by infusion.

4. WHAT ABOUT SIDE EFFECTS?

Luckily, they tend to be mild no matter which biologic you use, but some breakthrough biologics block less of the immune system and so far appear to have even fewer side effects. The most common are pain and rash at the injection site, which occurs in fewer than 30% of patients. During an infusion, you'll also be monitored for signs of an allergic reaction—e.g., fever, chills, nausea and drop in blood pressure. “Biologics have been on the market a long time and have a good safety record,” says Francisco Tausk, MD, professor of dermatology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine.

5. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO SEE RESULTS?

“It varies among biologics,” says Dr. Tausk. “Some are faster than others. However, results are usually seen between four and six weeks.” Of course, some people may find it can take several months to get the full benefits. In clinical trials, 50% to 95% of those beginning biologics experienced 75% improvement in psoriasis symptoms within four months. ●

Just ask!

Today, there are more biologics available than ever before. Explore the pros and cons of each with your physician, and ask which option might be best for you.

When cost is an issue

Biologics are usually covered by health insurance. Some biologics are given in your doctor's office by one of your healthcare team members, and may be covered by Medicare Part B. If you need help, ask the staff at your doctor's office.

Good to note!

If you are squeamish about injections, tell your doctor. There are some treatments that can be administered in the office by a member of your healthcare team, which might be more comfortable for you than versions that need to be self-injected.



These days, John Williamson is enjoying the simple everyday pleasures of being under the sun with his family. When the weather is nice, you'll find him jumping in the pool with sons Kade and Campbell or spending time with his wife, Illona, and his in-laws at a barbecue.

"This might seem like nothing, but for me it's been a huge change in my life," John says. "I'm finally living normally and let me tell you, normal is *good*. For the first time in what feels like forever, I'm not worrying about having to cover up every inch of my skin to leave the house."

This, of course, wasn't always the case for John, who struggled for years to gain control of his severe plaque psoriasis, which was causing him intense discomfort, embarrassment and was even impacting his sleep.

—
"I wore beanies in the middle of summer"

John's plaque psoriasis started out as a small scab on the back of his head

in late 2020. "I didn't know what it was, but it was itchy. And as a typical male, I kind of just ignored it. I didn't want to go to the doctor," the prison officer admits.

Not surprisingly, ignoring it didn't work, and the small scab slowly started to spread and eventually covered his scalp. To help control the itchiness and pain, John shaved his hair. "I went to a family funeral in the middle of summer, and I had to wear a beanie because of how bad the plaques looked on my head," he recalls.

But no hat could hide John's discomfort from his loved ones. "Illona saw how much I struggled, so she encouraged me to go to our primary physician and I finally agreed," he

says. At his appointment, his doctor quickly examined his skin and sent him home with a topical cream prescription.

"I was very excited to try it and see improvement, but unfortunately I didn't really notice a difference," he says. In fact, John's psoriasis continued to spread until it was all over his back, chest, arms and legs. At his worst, John would wake up in the middle of the night scratching his skin until it bled. "It drained my energy and took a toll on my mental health," he says. "I was depressed and embarrassed all the time."

—
"It took trial and error"

Luckily, with the support and encouragement of his wife and family, John never gave up. "Eventually my brother-in-law told me about his cousin who is a dermatologist who specializes in skin conditions

Continued on p. 15 ►

"I'M
finally
 LIVING
 NORMALLY—AND
 NORMAL IS GOOD!"

When the itching from his plaque psoriasis kept him up at night, draining his energy, John Williamson took control by finding a dermatologist who specializes in his condition. The result? Clear skin and carefree family time, thanks to a biologic.

—BY JOANA MANGUNE

FIND A TREATMENT THAT'S IN IT FOR

THE Long Haul^{*} with ILUMYA[®]



^{*}Based on 5-year data.



FOR ADULTS WITH
MODERATE-TO-SEVERE PLAQUE PSORIASIS

STARTS
WORKING AFTER

2

DOSES

STILL GOING
STRONG

5

YEARS
INTO TREATMENT

MEDICARE PART B
PATIENTS MAY PAY

\$0[†]

[†]Eligibility limits and
exclusions apply.

Talk to your doctor to see if this treatment is right for you.



What is ILUMYA?

ILUMYA[®] (tildrakizumab-asmn) is a prescription medicine used to treat adults with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis who may benefit from taking injections, pills (systemic therapy), or phototherapy (treatment using ultraviolet or UV light).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?

Do not use ILUMYA if you have had a severe allergic reaction to ILUMYA or any of its ingredients.

Get emergency medical help right away if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:

- feel faint • trouble breathing or throat tightness
- swelling of your face, eyelids, lips, mouth, tongue or throat
- chest tightness • skin rash

ILUMYA is a medicine that may lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. Your healthcare provider should check you for infections and tuberculosis (TB) before starting treatment with ILUMYA and

may treat you for TB before you begin treatment with ILUMYA if you have a history of TB or have active TB. Your healthcare provider should watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during and after treatment with ILUMYA.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have an infection or have symptoms of an infection, including:

- fever, sweats, or chills • muscle aches • weight loss • cough
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body different from your psoriasis • diarrhea or stomach pain • shortness of breath
- burning when you urinate or urinating more often than normal
- blood in your phlegm (mucus)

Before receiving ILUMYA, tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed in the section **"What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?"**
- have an infection that does not go away or that keeps coming back
- have TB or have been in close contact with someone with TB

- recently received or are scheduled to receive a vaccine (immunization). You should avoid receiving live vaccines during treatment with ILUMYA.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ILUMYA can harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ILUMYA passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

It is not known if ILUMYA is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

What are the possible side effects of ILUMYA?

ILUMYA may cause serious side effects. See "What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?"

The most common side effects of ILUMYA include: upper respiratory infections, injection site reactions and diarrhea. These are not all of the possible side effects of ILUMYA. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You are encouraged to report any negative side effects of ILUMYA to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

You are also encouraged to report side effects or ADEs (adverse drug events) to our Drug Safety Department at 1-800-406-7984 or drug.safetyUSA@sunpharma.com (preferred) with as much information as available.

Please read Brief Summary of the full Prescribing Information for ILUMYA on the next page and discuss any questions with your doctor.



Scan QR code or visit ILUMYA.com/affordability to discover the support we offer.



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ILUMYA[®]
tildrakizumab-asmn
Injection 100 mg/mL

Consumer Brief Summary

The risk information provided here is not comprehensive. This information does not take the place of talking to your doctor about your medical condition or treatment. To learn more, talk about ILUMYA® (tildrakizumab-asmn) with your health care provider or pharmacist. For more information and to obtain the FDA-approved product labeling, call 888-726-2299 or visit www.ilumya.com.

What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?

ILUMYA may cause serious side effects, including: Serious allergic reactions. Get emergency medical help right away if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:

- feel faint
- trouble breathing or throat tightness
- swelling of your face, eyelids, lips, mouth, tongue or throat
- chest tightness
- skin rash

Infections. ILUMYA is a medicine that may lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. Your healthcare provider should check you for infections and tuberculosis (TB) before starting treatment with ILUMYA and may treat you for TB before you begin treatment with ILUMYA if you have a history of TB or have active TB. Your healthcare provider should watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during and after treatment with ILUMYA.

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- fever, sweats, or chills
- muscle aches
- weight loss
- cough
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body different from your psoriasis
- diarrhea or stomach pain
- shortness of breath
- burning when you urinate or urinating more often than normal
- blood in your phlegm (mucus)

See “What are the possible side effects of ILUMYA?” for more information about side effects

What is ILUMYA?

ILUMYA is a prescription medicine used to treat adults with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis who may benefit from taking injections, pills (systemic therapy) or treatment using ultraviolet or UV light (phototherapy). It is not known if ILUMYA is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

Do not use ILUMYA if you have had a severe allergic reaction to tildrakizumab or any of the other ingredients in ILUMYA. See the end of this Medication Guide for a complete list of ingredients in ILUMYA.

Before receiving ILUMYA, tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed in the section “What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?”
- have an infection that does not go away or that keeps coming back
- have TB or have been in close contact with someone with TB
- recently received or are scheduled to receive a vaccine (immunization). You should avoid receiving live vaccines during treatment with ILUMYA.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ILUMYA can harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ILUMYA passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

How will I receive ILUMYA?

- ILUMYA should only be given to you by a healthcare provider.
- ILUMYA is given as an injection under your skin (subcutaneous injection) in areas of your body such as your thighs, stomach area (abdomen), or upper arm.
- If you miss a follow-up appointment and do not receive your dose of ILUMYA, schedule another appointment as soon as possible.

What are the possible side effects of ILUMYA?

ILUMYA may cause serious side effects. See “What is the most important information I should know about ILUMYA?”

The most common side effects of ILUMYA include:

- upper respiratory infections
- injection site reactions
- diarrhea

These are not all of the possible side effects of ILUMYA. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about the safe and effective use of ILUMYA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. You can ask your healthcare provider for information about ILUMYA that is written for health professionals.

What are the ingredients in ILUMYA?

Active ingredient: tildrakizumab-asmn

Inactive ingredients: L-histidine, L-histidine hydrochloride monohydrate, polysorbate 80, sucrose, and Water for Injection, USP.

Manufactured by: Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Limited

Mumbai, Maharashtra India 400 063

U.S. License No. 2092

U.S. Patent No. 8,404,813, 8,293,883 and 9,809,648

Tildrakizumab-asmn (active ingred.) Product of South Korea.

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“With my energy back, I can spend more quality time with my family,” says John with wife Illona and sons Kade and Campbell.

like mine. So, I went back to my primary physician and asked for a referral,” he says. “Once I saw the dermatologist, she knew it was plaque psoriasis right away. She helped me plan a treatment track and told me about a biologic treatment that’s been around for a few years and was really helping others with severe cases like mine. She also explained that we needed to try other treatments before we could take that route and I’d need to be patient. So first I went on a different topical cream, then an anti-inflammatory pill, neither of which helped.”

After a few months of trial and error, John was final-



“For the first time in what feels like forever, I’m not worrying about covering every inch of skin to leave the house.”

ly approved for the biologic injection in May 2022. “Within a couple of weeks of my first dose, I already started to notice a difference, my skin appeared noticeably less scabby,” he says. “After a few more sessions, my most problematic part, my scalp, finally cleared up and stopped being so itchy!”

—

“My body is 98% clear!”

Today, John’s body is 98% clear, and he continues to

get his injection every three months in his dermatologist’s office. “I sleep through the night now and no longer wake up with blood spots on my sheets from scratching,” he says. Best of all? He has all the energy he needs to keep up with his two young sons. “This medication changed my life. If I could go back in time, I would tell myself to see a dermatologist right away! There’s no shame in getting help,” he says. ●

Photos by Leah Hulst Photography

“WE’RE DONE HIDING OUR SKIN!”

Jorge and Frankie have discovered the wellness strategies that help soothe their itchy, irritated skin and free them to face the world with confidence. Ask your healthcare provider if their tips can work for you, too!

—BY BETH SHAPOURI

“Keep living your life!”

JORGE GAETA
BROOKLYN, NY

It was back in 2016 when Jorge became concerned that the raised red spots suddenly showing up on the backs of his hands and legs weren’t going away on their own.

“I went to the doctor thinking I was having some sort of allergic reaction to something, and he told me no, in fact I had ‘plaque psoriasis,’” Jorge recalls. “I was pretty surprised because no one I knew and no one in my family had ever had psoriasis. It felt like it came out of nowhere!”

The doctor started Jorge on a topical medication and, although he got some relief at first, “eventually it spread up into my elbows and all over my legs—my knees were the worst of it,” he says.

Things only became worse when the pandemic hit and the lack of access to his dermatologist and added stress of staying indoors caused an intense flare.

“Then I started on this kind of cycle—even when things started to open up, I wouldn’t go out in public at all because I was so nervous about people seeing the bright red and dry patches of skin,” Jorge says. “The stress and isolation were definitely not helping.”

Finally, relief came in 2021 when a new dermatologist prescribed Jorge a biologic. “It worked almost immediately,” he says. Now, his symptoms are down to one patch on his shin. And in retrospect, he wishes he



Photo by Lens of Her

hadn’t stressed so much about his condition before he got it under control.

“Looking back, I’m like, ‘Who cares? It’s just a skin condition!’ You have to live your life!”

Here, Jorge shares some of the tips that have helped him get a handle on his psoriasis over the years.

Go simple with skin care.

Jorge has found that staying away from body prod-

ucts that contain perfumes has been helpful in holding off the irritation. “I didn’t realize how many products I used had fragrances added—even hair products. Now I look for brands like CeraVe and Dove, which offer fragrance- and perfume-free options.”

Prioritize sleep.

Lack of sleep can make Jorge’s flares worse, so he has a few simple rules: “Around 10 PM, I have my

“Looking back, I’m like, ‘Who cares? It’s just a skin condition!’ You have to live your life!”

‘shutdown time’ where all my electronics get put away, since they say the light they produce can interrupt your sleep cycle. Then I brush my teeth and make my way to bed.” On nights when insomnia strikes? Jorge reaches for a book instead of his phone to keep from getting overstimulated.

Find outlets for stress.

For Jorge, adopting his dog, Rami, was a big support in his care. Not only has his furry friend been a source of love and companionship, but he helped with stress in several ways. “He forced me to go out into the world again. I walk him in the park every day. Just being outdoors in fresher air, that really helped me.” ▶

“Learn to love yourself!”

FRANKIE STARR
ORANGE COUNTY,
CA

There was a time when Frankie showered with the lights off so she didn't have to look at her own skin. Having the condition since childhood, the mom of four (to Azzy, Ashera, Royal and Seraph with husband, Ryan) used to feel like a slave to her psoriasis. But in her late 20s, she finally had enough. “I was getting fed up with letting it dominate my life,” she explains.

So she went on a journey of self-acceptance to learn how to love her skin, even when she was experiencing a flare. One thing that helped: volunteering at an elementary school library. “When you've got a group of kids asking questions, learning to answer in a way that's helpful

for them to understand and not feel scared was a really big step for me.”

It also helped her realize that the main thing she worried about wasn't her actual psoriasis but what people thought of her when they saw the spots. Feeling emboldened, in 2018 she started sharing her journey on Instagram using the handle *@silveryscales*—and with the positive reception she received, she suddenly found a whole new confidence.

Today, she no longer feels held back by her psoriasis—and she's an even more present mom. “It doesn't stop me from taking them to the pool or the park. I'm not putting my own agenda of hiding my skin on the table when my kids want to do something, and that feels great,” she explains.

Here, Frankie shares how she boosts her confi-

dence and takes charge of her psoriasis.

Keep the focus on you.

When experiencing a flare, “people are going to stare,” insists Frankie. But she says seeing it as their lack of knowledge rather than a reflection on her helped her reframe her state of mind. “I think the biggest thing is letting go your control of other people's perceptions of you. It makes it easier to accept yourself,” she says.

Show your skin—and educate.

If you're having trouble taking those first steps to feeling freer to show your plaques—and you'd like to—you can try what helped Frankie: looking at it as an educational moment. “Showing your skin during a flare is the only way to do that—rather than a bar-

rier to going out or wearing what you want, you can look at a flare as an opportunity,” she explains.

Connect with others.

Another crucial part of Frankie's journey to psoriasis confidence? Her online psoriasis community. “Seeing other beautiful human beings—and I mean beautiful in the most diverse way—at the beach, enjoying life, sharing pictures of their skin, it makes you realize we can love ourselves in ways we'd never thought of before,” she says. ●

Health Monitor

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“The biggest thing is letting go your control of other's perceptions of you.”

Photos by Jason Eisenberg



SUPER ITCHY SCALP—HELP!
My scalp psoriasis has become unbearably itchy and I just want to hide! Can I wear a hat or will it make it worse? What treatments are available?

Q
A

Answers to your questions about plaque psoriasis

A: Wearing a hat does not generally make psoriasis of the scalp worse, so it's okay to wear one. For over-the-counter shampoos, there are several ingredients you can scan the label for that may help, including salicylic acid, tar, ketoconazole and zinc pyrithione. On the prescription side, there are products that contain topical corticosteroids, calcipotriene solution, or tazarotene foam or gel—you'll

have to ask your health-care provider which ones might be best for you.

DEALING WITH DISCOLORATION

Q: *I finally found a treatment that works! But some of the skin that's healed seems to be a different color. How can I fix that?*

A: Congrats on finding a treatment! After psoriasis plaques clear, you may notice some discolored skin. Assuming these are not scars, but just post-psoriasis discoloration, they usually fade, but it can take years for the skin to look normal. One option is to ask your doctor about phototherapy, which can help the discoloration become less noticeable. ●

OUR EXPERT:

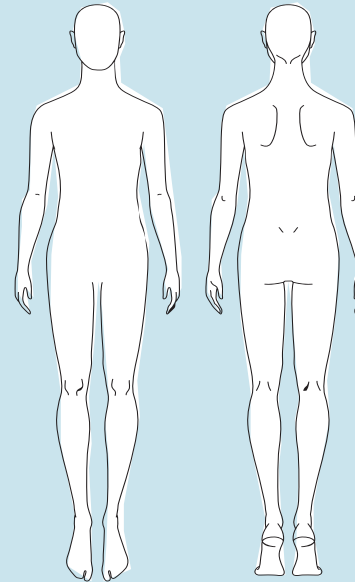
Mark G. Lebwohl, MD, Dean for Clinical Therapeutics, professor and chairman emeritus at Kimberly and Eric J. Waldman Department of Dermatology, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York

How is your psoriasis?

Identify your triggers and mark your flare-up spots using this tool. Share your answers with your care team. This will help them create a treatment plan just for you!

1. Which areas of your body are affected?

Please indicate by marking the areas of your body where you have a psoriasis patch.



2. How bothered are you by symptoms?

Please rate how the following symptoms affect you on a scale from 1 (not very much) to 5 (always/almost always):

- I can't sleep well. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have areas of red skin. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have areas of dry skin. 1 2 3 4 5
- My skin is itchy. 1 2 3 4 5
- My skin bleeds. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Have you noticed any triggers?

Please write down any factors that seem to trigger a flare:

- Activities: _____
- Irritants: _____
- Environments/Temperatures: _____
- Diet: _____
- Infections and other illnesses: _____
- Hormonal changes: _____
- Emotions: _____

4. Check the statement that best reflects how you feel as a result of your psoriasis:

- I feel sad and hopeless.
 - Never Rarely
 - Sometimes Often Always
- I feel nervous, edgy or anxious.
 - Never Rarely
 - Sometimes Often Always
- I feel like everyone is staring at me.
 - Never Rarely
 - Sometimes Often Always
- I say no to activities because I never know if I'll have visible plaques.
 - Never Rarely
 - Sometimes Often Always

LOOK YOUR BEST!

Ready to give your wardrobe a makeover but don't want to risk aggravating your skin? Follow these tips from fashion blogger and psoriasis sufferer Helen Hanrahan (theflakyfashionista.blogspot.com) and step out with confidence!

Discover your new black

If scalp psoriasis is a problem, make gray, taupe or cream your new basic color. These colors will conceal any flaking and let you stand out in a sea of darker fabrics during the winter months.

Try on knitwear

Don't be tempted to buy knitwear online. Yarns that suit some people may irritate others, so make sure you try it on before you buy.

Follow these trends

Pale pink and tartan! The reason? Pink ensures scalp flakes aren't visible. And tartan acts as a perfect camouflage—just make sure it contains an element of white.

Distract the eye

It's all in the accessories! When dressing, select items that draw the eye to the area(s) you most want to show off. A fabulous statement necklace, a chunky cocktail ring, a large man's watch or a stunning cuff bracelet will take attention away from your skin. Just wait for the compliments!

Time to sparkle

For parties, invest in sequin tops or dresses—flakes simply slide off them, so you can sparkle without worry. Pair a sequin dress with opaque tights and shoe boots. Wear a sequin top with skinny trousers and style the ensemble with a bright-colored clutch and heels.



...And *feel* your best too!

Fashion upgrades can help you look great. Now here are a few ideas from folks with psoriasis to help you feel great, too.

Shine the light

Come wintertime, Heather Durocher's skin takes a beating as the temperatures dip. "That's why I use in-home light therapy," the Saginaw, MI, resident says. "It helps during the months we go without a lot of sunshine for days." The National Psoriasis Foundation says ultraviolet B (UVB) light units (which require a prescription) can be an effective treatment for psoriasis; UVB light (which is present in sunlight) penetrates the skin and slows the growth of affected skin cells.

Find calm each day

Despite busy days teaching, Troyce Thome, of San Clemente, CA, makes sure to maintain a sense of "calm" in her life. "I take walks through nature when I can, and I always opt for the most natural setting. If it's a choice between pavement or a dirt path, I take the dirt path."

Open up to new activities

A devoted runner, Heather didn't expect to like road biking or swimming—until she tried them. "I had to go out of my comfort zone to give these two sports a try since I wanted to get into triathlons," she says. "It feels good to work my muscles in different ways—and these are two more ways I can maintain a strong body and strong mind."

Try tai chi

"Tai chi clears my mind and calms me," says Troyce. "It's comforting on a deep level and alleviates stress—which has reduced the frequency, intensity and severity of my psoriasis flares," says Troyce, who began studying tai chi, sometimes referred to as "moving meditation," 20 years ago. She hasn't experienced a flare since!

Say "cheeeeeez" to track your progress

So you've switched medications or implemented some new lifestyle change, but you're still waiting for the results to show? Try taking pictures. Subtle changes are easier to spot if you have "befores" and "afters" to compare. ●

Health Monitor Living



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Questions to ask your doctor today

How would you classify my plaque psoriasis? Is it mild, moderate or severe?



Does it seem like my current treatment is controlling my psoriasis?



I'm uncomfortable giving myself injections. Can my dermatologist administer them?



How can I figure out what's causing my flares?



If not, can you suggest a treatment that requires few injections, has the least number of side effects and won't affect any other health problems I may have?



What can I do to find relief during a flare?



On treatment and need help covering the cost?

Ask your healthcare provider about patient assistance programs or call the manufacturer of the treatment you have been prescribed. Many pharmaceutical companies offer copay assistance programs that can make treatment more affordable.