



How can I get more information about psoriasis?

Call the National Psoriasis Foundation at 1-800-723-9166 for a free general information packet, or send the attached form. Your packet will include a description of current treatments and a list of free booklets about specific therapies and psoriasis topics.

By sending a donation of any amount to the NPF, you will receive the *Bulletin*, the official national newsletter (six times a year) and *Pharmacy News*, the mail-order pharmacy newsletter (three times a year). The NPF can assist you in many ways. We welcome your letter or call.

Member Benefits:

As a member, your annual membership gift provides the following:

- Two National Newsletters
- 25 Educational Booklets
- Support Groups
- Pen Pal Club
- Mail-Order Pharmacy Service
- Individual Advice and Assistance
- Opportunities to Participate in Research Studies

National Psoriasis Foundation

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The NPF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, lay organization working to help people with psoriasis improve the quality of their lives. Tax-deductible donations support the NPF's public education and research programs. The NPF annual report is available by request. ©National Psoriasis Foundation, Inc., Portland, Oregon 1997.

FROM

National Psoriasis Foundation
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PLACE
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What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a chronic skin disorder that affects over six million people in the United States. Plaque psoriasis, the most common form, is characterized by inflamed skin lesions topped with silvery white scales.

Psoriasis can be limited to a few areas of the skin (mild), or it can be widespread (moderate-to-severe).

A normal skin cell matures in 28 to 30 days and sheds from the skin unnoticed. Psoriatic skin cells mature in only three to four days. They "heap up" and form scaly lesions. Psoriasis lesions can be painful and itchy, and they can crack and bleed.

What causes psoriasis?

No one knows exactly what causes psoriasis. Scientists believe that some type of biochemical stimulus triggers the abnormally high skin cell growth that creates psoriasis lesions. Research has shown that heredity plays a role.

Who gets psoriasis?

Psoriasis affects males and females equally. It appears most often between the ages of 15 and 35, although it can strike in infancy or old age.

How is psoriasis diagnosed?

A physician usually makes the diagnosis after looking at the skin. Occasionally a physician examines a skin biopsy under a microscope. Pitting of the nails is sometimes a sign of psoriasis. There is no specific medical test for psoriasis.

Is all psoriasis alike?

No. There are several forms of psoriasis. **Plaque** is by far the most common. Other forms are **guttate**, characterized by small, dot-like lesions; **pustular**, characterized by pustules (blister-like

lesions of non-infectious fluid) and intense scaling; **inverse**, characterized by its appearance in skin folds; and **erythrodermic**, characterized by intense redness and swelling, exfoliation of dead skin, and pain.

Approximately 10 percent of people with psoriasis also have **psoriatic arthritis**. It generally affects the hands and feet, but other parts of the body can be affected. Psoriatic arthritis can affect a few joints, or it can be severe or disabling.

Is psoriasis contagious?

No, it is not contagious. It is not something you "catch."

What parts of the body are affected?

Psoriasis commonly appears on the scalp, knees, elbows, hands and feet. It rarely affects the face, although no area of the skin is exempt — including the genitals and the palms and soles.

What are the chances of getting psoriasis?

It is not possible to predict who will get psoriasis. Heredity plays a role, but the mode of inheritance is not clear. Environmental factors such as physical trauma to the skin, infections and stress can trigger the onset of psoriasis, even in people without an apparent family history of psoriasis.

Is there a cure for psoriasis?

There is no cure. However, there are many different treatments, both topical and systemic, that can clear psoriasis for periods of time. Experimentation is often required to find a treatment, or combination of treatments, that will work for an individual. Some people experience spontaneous remissions in the cycle of their psoriasis.

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(DETACH THIS FORM AND MAIL)

- Please send me a **FREE** packet of information about psoriasis.
- Please sign me up right now as an NPF member. I'm enclosing a donation to start my membership subscriptions *and* get my **FREE** packet of information about psoriasis.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Referring Physician or Medical Facility (optional) _____

IF YOU WISH TO JOIN THE NPF,
SEND YOUR CHECK TO:

National Psoriasis Foundation
P.O. Box 9009
Portland, Oregon 97207-9009

OR

CALL 1-800-723-9166 WITH YOUR
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