



Understanding Psoriasis

Psoriasis is most likely to appear between the ages of 15 and 25.

1. Introduction

Psoriasis is an immune-related condition that commonly causes thick, red patches of skin with silvery scales. These often appear on the elbows, knees, and scalp. Psoriasis can cause itchiness and irritation that may be painful. As this condition is chronic, it tends to go through cycles with flares lasting from weeks to months and then subsiding. Plaque psoriasis is the most common type, affecting 80-90% of people diagnosed with this condition.

2. Symptoms and Causes

The cause of psoriasis is not fully understood. It is thought to be an immune system problem where infection-fighting cells attack healthy skin cells by mistake. This leads to dead skin cells accumulating, creating the scaly patches seen in psoriasis.

Common signs and symptoms include:

- + A patchy rash that may be pink or red on lighter skin and shades of purple or gray on darker skin
- + Small scaling spots on the skin
- + Dry, cracked skin that may bleed
- + Itching, burning or soreness

3. Risk Factors

Anyone can develop psoriasis. Factors that can increase the risk of developing the disease include:

- + Family history of psoriasis
- + Smoking tobacco
- + Obesity

Flare-ups can also be triggered by emotional stress, certain drugs, weather, or alcohol.

4. Treatment

Currently, there is no cure for psoriasis. Treatment focuses on slowing down the growth of skin cells to relieve pain, itching, and burning. Treatment typically falls within three categories, including:

- + Topicals and ointments
- + Light therapy
- + Oral or injected medications

The best treatment varies by individuals and their specific needs. Many treatment plans include a combination of treatments to determine the most effective approach.

Did you know?

Over 8 million people in the United States have psoriasis.

For more information on psoriasis and supportive resources, please visit <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriasis/symptoms-causes/syc-20355840>.

References:

- <https://www.healthline.com/health/psoriasis/facts-statistics-infographic>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriasis/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20355845>
- <https://www.psoriasis.org/>
- <https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1943419-overview>