

A Toolkit Supporting Your Journey to Stability with Psoriasis

Help!

If your psoriasis is out of control and making you suffer, you're not alone. The negative impacts on people's quality of life, physical and emotional, can be significant.

Psoriasis affects over a million Canadians. The most common form of the condition is plaque psoriasis, which affects approximately 90% of people with psoriasis. Up to 30% of people with psoriasis will develop psoriatic arthritis and 5-10% have functional disability from arthritis.


Having psoriasis may increase the risk of developing other chronic diseases, including heart attack, stroke, diabetes, cancer, depression, and liver disease. It is important to let your family physician, specialist or nurse practitioner know about any concerns you may have and be sure to discuss prevention and screening for associated conditions with them.

Most cases of psoriasis can be controlled, and most people who have psoriasis can live normal lives. However, some people who have psoriasis are so self-conscious and embarrassed about their appearance that they become depressed and withdrawn.

The emotional impact of psoriasis on a person's life does not depend on the severity of the lesions. It is determined by how each person feels about the itchiness, pain and discomfort of psoriasis and the visibility of the lesions.

Psoriasis can impact every aspect of an individual's life, including their ability to work and maintain relationships. Many individuals suffer from low self-confidence, anxiety, depression, pain, itchiness and, as a result, sleep deprivation.

Mild




<3% of the body.*

Generally involves isolated patches on the knees, elbows, scalp, hands and feet.

Typically little effect on the quality of life.

Moderate




3-10% of the body.*

Generally appears on the arms, torso, scalp and other regions.

Often results in concern about others' reactions to visible lesions.

Generally affects the quality of life.

Severe



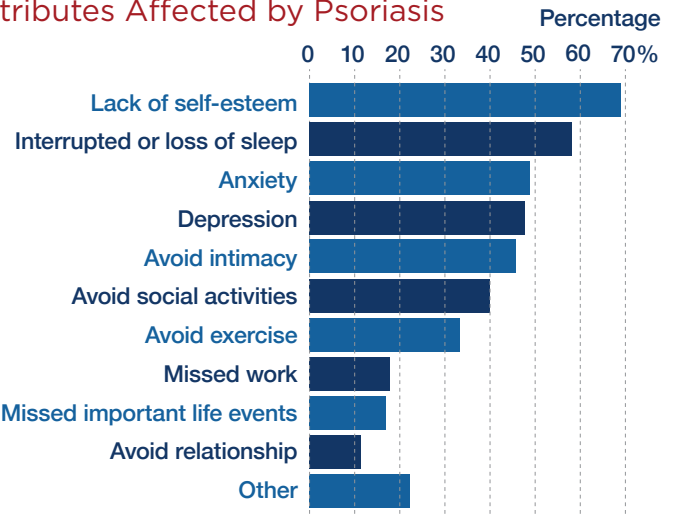
>10% of the body.*

May affect large areas of skin.

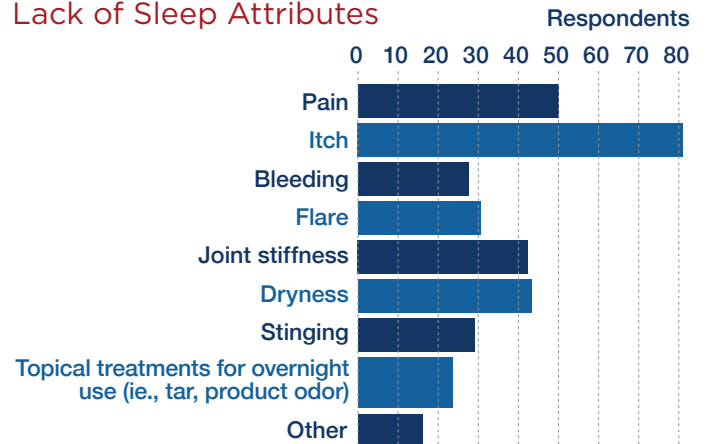
Psoriasis of the face and palms/soles may be considered as severe.

Typically has a severe impact on the quality of life.

Attributes Affected by Psoriasis



Lack of Sleep Attributes



*To assess the area of involvement, consider that your palm covers about 1% of the skin's surface

My Journey to Stability

Stability is defined as an individual's personal comfort with the effectiveness of treatment, the degree of skin clearance, and quality of life.

The good news is that there are solutions that work to manage psoriasis and its side effects. Many different things work for different people. Here are some examples:

- Prescription and over-the-counter oral and topical medications, including biologics and biosimilars
- UV Light Therapy
- Naturopathy
- Acupuncture
- Medical cannabis
- Yoga
- Support groups

What are Biologics and Biosimilars?

Biologics are products that are produced from living organisms or contain components of living organisms. Types of biologic drugs include vaccines, blood, blood components, cells, allergens, genes, tissues, and recombinant proteins.

Biosimilars are biological products that are very similar to their reference biologics and for which there are no clinically meaningful differences in terms of safety, purity, and potency.

These treatments block inflammation pathways that can be effective for patients with moderate to severe psoriasis. For more information, visit <https://www.canadianpsoriasisnetwork.com/psoriasis/treatment-options/> and talk to your doctor about what is right for you.

Don't wait to take action. If your psoriasis is uncontrolled, here are three steps you can take right now to find a solution that works for you:

- 1 Start and keep a journal that helps you track your journey to stability. Use it to set goals and help you along the way. How do you feel? What are you trying? What seems to work and what doesn't? What questions do you have? For whom? What are the answers you received or that you found?
- 2 Talk to your family physician or nurse practitioner about other treatment options, and about a referral to a dermatologist, if you aren't seeing one already.
- 3 Visit a naturopathic doctor or other complementary therapist for an assessment and recommendations. If your health benefit plan doesn't cover this or you can't afford the regular cost, training colleges often offer discounted services from qualified, supervised students.



The Canadian Psoriasis Network is a national non-profit organization focused on enhancing the quality of life of people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis by providing current information on research and treatment options and by working with others to build awareness and advocacy about the complexity of these conditions.

Reach us at:

<https://www.canadianpsoriasisnetwork.com>

- @PsoriasisCanada
- Cdnpsoriasisnetwork
- 1-888-859-9662

Here are six questions to ask every provider offering a new or different treatment (or to ask yourself or the pharmacist if the treatment is over-the-counter):

- 1 What are the possible benefits of this treatment?
- 2 What are its possible costs (including financial, physical side effects, mental side effects, and emotional side effects)?
- 3 Do the benefits outweigh the costs enough for me to try this?
- 4 How long should I try this treatment before assessing its effectiveness?
- 5 If I decide I want to stop or change the regimen, what is the process to safely do so?
- 6 Who do I contact if I have follow-up questions before my next appointment?

Here are four things you should always do when you meet a new provider:

- 1 Do your research before the appointment and write down any questions you have in your journal.
- 2 If possible, bring someone with you to the appointment who is prepared to support you.
- 3 Write down all the information and next steps from the provider (or ask your support person to do this) in your journal. Ask the questions you brought with you and write down the answers.
- 4 If you need time or further information to decide on a course of action, take the time you need and gather the information you need to make an informed choice. Don't be afraid to get a second opinion if you think it will help.

Last, but not least, reach out to us for support. We are here to help you and your loved ones on your journey to stability.

Methods & Limitations

The Journey to Stability Survey was open from September 15 to November 8, 2017. Online surveys were completed by 286 English respondents, with the majority (96.5%) being adults living with psoriasis. The survey findings only represent the experiences of Canadians who responded. There was no accompanying educational material provided to respondents, so any limitations in their own knowledge (e.g. about new treatments like biologics or biosimilars) were not addressed. In addition, sample bias is possible as people dealing with issues related to their psoriasis may be more apt to respond to such a survey rather than people who have achieved greater control over their condition.



The Canadian Association of Psoriasis Patients is a national non-profit formed to better serve the needs of psoriasis patients across the country and to improve the quality of life for all Canadian psoriasis patients. Our goal is to be a resource for psoriatic patients and their families to advocate for improved patient care and quality of life.

Reach us at:

<https://www.canadianpsoriasis.ca>

- @Psoriasis_CAPP
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- 1-877-505-2772