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Flare-ups

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Pso Serious

Preventing Psoriasis Flare-ups



There are more than one million Canadians affected with psoriasis. Receiving news of this diagnosis can be unsettling for many as although our understanding of its cause has grown within the past 20 years, at present, there is no cure for this disease. There is a wide

range of treatments patients have at their disposal such as topical medications, light therapy (phototherapy), oral medications, and injections. What tends to get overlooked amidst the extensive array of treatment options, is lifestyle management practices that can help reduce the triggering of flare-ups. There are many triggers that can exacerbate the inflammatory process in psoriasis, and practices one can engage in to limit these events.

Using moisturizing lotions

Symptoms of psoriasis, such as itchiness and redness, can be reduced by using a moisturizer. Apply heavy moisturizing creams or ointments upon washing your hands, getting out of the bath tub and shower, as it can help lock in the moisture in the skin. Moisturizers can also help the skin heal. Look for fragrance- and alcohol-free products as they can actually dry out the skin and worsen your symptoms.

Reducing stress

Stress and tension can cause psoriasis flare-ups. Engaging in stress-reduction practices are important to reduce the occurrences of these flare-ups. Such practices include participating in yoga, meditation, tai chi and/or support groups. Other stress reduction methods include deep breathing exercises, massages, and getting a good night's sleep (approximately 8 hours a night).

Avoid scrapes, bumps, cuts, and infections

An interesting peculiarity of psoriasis is an incident known as the 'Koebner phenomenon'. This phenomenon describes the formation of psoriatic lesions on areas of the body that has been injured and/or traumatized. The appearance of the skin lesions to the time of trauma is usually 2-6 weeks. To limit this, if injured it is important to treat the skin quickly. Avoid scratching or picking at the skin by applying moisturizing cream. Avoid insect bites by applying insect repellent. Be mindful when shaving and when clipping your nails. Avoid engaging in acupuncture therapy, tattoos, and body piercings.

Avoid alcohol consumption

Alcohol consumption has not only been shown to be a trigger of psoriasis, but it can interfere with the effectiveness of your medication. Avoid situations that you are used to drinking (such as certain activities, going to different events, etc.), learn how to politely say "no thank you" if someone offers you a beverage, and find support groups that can help empower you through this process.

Protection against low humidity

During the winter and fall months, the drop-in temperature can make the air become drier. The low humidity can cause the skin to lose moisture, causing cracks and psoriasis flares. To limit this, acquire a small humidifier that can provide moisture into the air of your bedroom and/or living area.

Avoid medications that can trigger flares

Several medications have been shown to make psoriasis flares worse. If you have any of the drugs listed below, it is important to inform your dermatologist as it can affect your management.

(continued on next page)

Do you Follow Us?



Psoriasis Flare (cont.)

Also, if you do have any of the medications listed below, ask your doctor for appropriate substitutes.

- Lithium; used to treat psychiatric disorders.
- Propranolol and other beta-blockers; used to treat heart conditions.
- Quinidine; used to treat heart arrhythmias.

Eating a nutritious diet and engaging in exercise

Higher body mass index (BMI) has been shown to make psoriasis treatments less effective. Moreover, a reduction in body mass through diet and exercise in obese and overweight patients with psoriasis has been shown to reduce psoriasis severity. Aim to engage in a healthy lifestyle by consuming a well-balanced diet high in fruits and vegetables. Omega-3 fatty acids have also been shown to reduce inflammation. Some sources of omega-3

include: fish oil supplements, nuts, and seeds. Participating in regular exercise (such as lifting weights, or jogging) can help with achieving a healthy weight, and aid in coping with the stress associated with the condition.

Avoid cigarette smoking

Smoking or being around those who smoke can induce psoriasis flares. To avoid smoking, one can: obtain intensive support program referrals from their healthcare provider, look into nicotine replacement therapy, avoid smoking triggers that can set off the urge to smoke, and staying busy to keep their mind off smoking.

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Journey To Stability

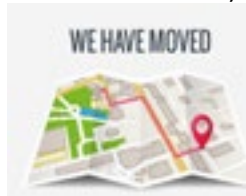


In 2017 we partnered with the [Canadian Psoriasis Network](#) to develop the Journey to Stability Survey, with the goal of achieving a better understanding of a patient's journey to achieving clear skin and stability. We found that in Canada, the journey to having your psoriasis well controlled or stable is an onerous one, and often involves failing on several treatments before finding one that works for you. In fact, we found that a considerable number of people lived 10 or more years with their psoriasis being uncontrolled, before they found something that worked to achieve stability. We also found that once a patient achieved stability there was a strong

reaction to the possibility of having to be switched from their current medication to another for non-medical reasons. In fact, many feared that their mental health would be negatively impacted and they indicated that they would fight to remain on their current medication. The results of the survey confirms that there is an unmet need for more treatment options, education and support for Canadians psoriatic patients. Read all of these findings in our report [Psoriasis: Journey to Stability](#). We hope this report will provide the groundwork for education, awareness campaigns and programs in addition to further research.

We have moved

We have moved to a new, bright, sunny office space. Our phone number and email address remain the same, but our new address is:



**223 Colonnade Rd S.
Unit 111
Ottawa, ON K2E 7K3**

Pso Serious 2018

Have you seen our Pso Serious Report? We developed this report to highlight the changes to the care and treatment environment for psoriasis patients in Canada over the last four years. While we found there were many advances being made, there was still work to be done to ensure that everyone has equitable access to treatment and care. [Read the report](#) and find out how your province fared compared to the rest of the country.



CAPP is grateful for the support of our sponsors for making this newsletter possible.



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