

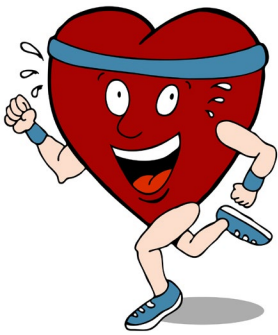
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Psoriasis and Cardiovascular Disease



Psoriasis is a chronic, complex disorder that results from a genetic predisposition combined with a variety of unknown and in some cases environmental factors such as infections, psychological stress, obesity, smoking, alcohol and certain medications. It is characterized by scaly, red patches commonly seen on

the scalp, elbows, knees, nails, hands and feet. In recent years, there has been a greater interest in the association between psoriasis and cardiovascular disease (CVD).

Cardiovascular disease refers to a class of diseases involving the heart and/or blood vessels. This group of diseases include ischemic heart disease, heart attack, congestive heart failure, cerebrovascular disease and many others. It is the second leading cause of death in Canada right after cancer, in both men and women.

There is extensive research that patients with psoriasis have a higher risk of having a CVD as compared with the general population. Moreover, risk factors for serious complications of CVD such as high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, elevated blood lipid levels, obesity, and smoking have been found to be more prevalent in patients with psoriasis.

Cardiovascular disease is believed to be caused by atherosclerosis – a chronic inflammatory disease of the blood vessels. The immune system is believed to be involved in the development of atherosclerosis. In this disease, plaque will build up inside of the arteries making it difficult for the blood vessels to carry oxygen-rich blood to the heart, and other vital organs. Similarly, psoriasis is

a chronic inflammatory disease that has similar immune cells involved in its development. Scientists believe that that the biological link between psoriasis and CVD may be explained through their common inflammatory and immunological pathways.

So, knowing that psoriasis patients are at increased cardiovascular risk, what can be done to lower that risk? The goal is to proactively identify, control and prevent modifiable risk factors from increasing the odds of developing CVD. Here are some general lifestyle modification tips to lower the risks of developing CVD:

- The Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) to lower blood pressure and lipid levels. This is a diet high in vegetables/fruits, low-fat dairy, whole grains, poultry, fish, and nuts; low in sweets, sugar-sweetened beverages, and red meat.
- In particular, omega-3 fatty acid rich foods should be incorporated to reduce the risk of coronary artery disease. Two or more servings/week of fish (especially oily fish like salmon) is encouraged.
- Salt/sodium intake should be reduced. It is recommended that sodium intake should be between 1.5-2.3 g/day.
- Alcohol intake should be limited to no more than 3 drinks/day for men (max of 15 drinks/week) and no more than 2 drinks/day for women (max of 10 drinks/week)*.
- Patients are encouraged to maintain a healthy body mass index (BMI) of (18.5-24.9 kg/m²) and waist circumference (<102 cm for men, and <88 cm for women)*.

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Do you Follow Us?



Cardiovascular disease(cont.)

- Physical activity of at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic exercise per week*, in bouts of 10 min or more. Examples of moderate exercise includes brisk walking and bike riding, whereas examples of vigorous exercise include cross country skiing and swimming.
- All patients are encouraged to stop smoking. Speak with your family doctor about different pharmacological options available that can help you quit (e.g., Nicotine Replacement Therapy, Bupropion, or Varenicline).

Increased stress has been associated with coronary heart disease and stroke. Managing one's stress levels can also help reduce your risk of CVD. Speak with your family doctor about different ways to help control stress levels with both non pharmacologic and pharmacologic options if necessary.

**according to the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation*

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Kids Corner



We are so excited to launch a special section of our website that is meant just for kids. Whether you are a child living with psoriasis, or have parent, friend or loved one living with psoriatic disease, then this section is just for you! It is written in terms that children will understand and relate to and has some fun resources and activities to help them learn more about psoriasis and to share with their friends and classmates. We have included some great infographics and will continue to add activity sheets and other fun resources that are meant just for kids! [Check it out now](#) and be sure to let us know what you think be emailing us info@canadianpsoriasis.ca

IMHA Online Resource Library



The Canadian Institutes for Health Research - Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis recently launched a new online resource library. It is meant to be a portal for relevant

information on conditions such as psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Resources and links can be found [here under the tab "Skin Health"](#). Here you will find links to informative websites, reports, articles and videos.

SAVE THE DATE: We will be recognizing National Psoriatic Arthritis day on October 19th!

World Psoriasis Day 2019

World Psoriasis Day is on October 29th. We are pleased to announce this year's theme for World Psoriasis Day is **"Connected"**. Psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are serious diseases that that require access to a comprehensive care and treatment. So, let us continue to raise awareness of the true magnitude of the disease and stress the need for connected efforts to improve the lives of those affected by them!

Stay tuned as we plan for our activities to mark the day.

Let's get  **CONNECTED**



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



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