

Information om hudsjukdomen psoriasis på engelska. Informationen kommer från Psoriasisförbundet

Information about the skin condition psoriasis

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition. In Sweden, around 250,000 people suffer from psoriasis. The symptoms are red spots with white heads. These are caused by skin cells being regenerated faster than normal. Psoriasis outbreaks can occur anywhere on the skin, but are most common on the elbows, knees, trunk and scalp. Psoriasis may also appear as tiny spots on the skin or as very red skin in areas such as the armpits, groin or lower abdomen. The hands, feet and nails can also be attacked. Scientists believe psoriasis is what is known as an autoimmune disorder, whereby the immune system causes inflammation of the skin and often of the joints as well. The condition affecting the joints is called psoriatic arthritis.

What causes psoriasis?

It is not certain what causes psoriasis, but genes are thought to be a major factor in people's tendency to develop the condition. As well as genes, other factors such as infections and stress may contribute to the appearance and course of the condition.

Who suffers from psoriasis?

Psoriasis can strike people at any time during their life, but often affects young people. Half of all sufferers have the condition before reaching the age of 25. Young children too can suffer from psoriasis, but this is less common. Psoriasis affects men and women in roughly equal numbers.

Is psoriasis infectious?

No, psoriasis is not in the least infectious.

Can psoriasis be cured?

No, as yet there is no known cure for psoriasis, but the symptoms can be alleviated. Intensive research is under way in Sweden and abroad to identify the genes responsible for the condition, and to develop safe, effective treatments that keep the symptoms at bay.

How is psoriasis treated?

Modern treatments for psoriasis are designed to allow sufferers to lead a normal life as easily as possible. The condition is treated with moisturising and medicinal creams, and various types of ultraviolet light. Treatment may also come in tablet form.

Psoriasis treatment should always be prescribed by a doctor, preferably a dermatologist.

What is psoriatic arthritis?

Psoriatic arthritis is inflammation of the joints caused by psoriasis. Around 30 per cent of psoriasis sufferers have inflamed joints, tendons and cartilages. The symptoms are pain or aching, stiffness and tiredness. When people suffer from psoriatic arthritis, their toe and finger joints are often swollen, and inflammation of the joints between the vertebrae is also common.

How is psoriatic arthritis treated?

Psoriatic arthritis is treated with various types of medication such as painkillers, anti-inflammatory and cytostatics. Physiotherapy and exercise in a heated pool play an important part in the treatment, along with joint protectors and other orthopaedic aids. Sufferers of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis may need psychological support and counselling.

What is Psoriasisförbundet ?

Psoriasisförbundet, (Swedish Psoriasis Association) exists to help sufferers of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, and their families. Through Psoriasisförbundet, which has over 100 branches at county and local level, you can obtain more information about the condition and possible treatments. You can also meet and talk to other people living with psoriasis. Psoriasisförbundet is committed to ensuring that psoriasis care in Sweden meets the highest standards and is readily available. Psoriasisförbundet works to raise awareness of the condition, and to influence opinion regarding psoriasis and the needs and living conditions of sufferers. Psoriasisförbundet is strongly committed to psoriasis research, contributing large sums annually. The society publishes a bimonthly journal, Psoriasistidningen. The society's website, www.psoriasisforbundet.se, contains further information (in Swedish) about the condition and the society.

For sufferers aged 7–30, the society has a youth wing: Ung med psoriasis, www.ungmedpsoriasis.se

Psoriasisförbundet hopes that, having read this information in your own language, you will join the society. Please contact our head office, or the county or local branch closest to you. You will find a list of all county and local branches on our website, www.psoriasisforbundet.se.