



PSORIASIS

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a common skin condition that affects nearly two percent of the population. Most commonly, it causes a thick scaly buildup of the outer layer of the skin. The thick areas are called plaques. They usually occur on the scalp and pressure points such as the elbows, knees, hands, feet, and lower back, but any part of the body – including the nails – can be affected. The skin under the plaques is often red.

Psoriasis is a chronic condition, which means you will have it indefinitely. Psoriasis can be limited to a few areas of the skin (mild), or it can be widespread (moderate-to-severe).

What causes psoriasis?

No one knows exactly what causes psoriasis. It is not possible to predict who will get psoriasis. Research has shown that heredity plays a role; but, environmental factors such as physical injury to the skin, infections and stress can trigger psoriasis, even in people who do not have any relatives with psoriasis. Drinking alcohol in excess can also make it worse.

Psoriasis is NOT contagious.

Who gets psoriasis?

Psoriasis affects both men and women. It generally appears between the ages of 15 and 35, but it can develop in infancy and old age.

Is there a cure for psoriasis?

There is no cure. But, there are many treatments available that can clear psoriasis for periods of time. The most commonly used medicines are tar and steroid creams applied directly to the skin. In selected cases, your physician may advise ultraviolet treatment (note: natural sunlight helps psoriasis, but sunburns can make psoriasis worse). In rare cases, internal medicines are used for psoriasis. Extensive research is under way to find new treatments for. Since the disease comes and goes on its own, there are often long periods of time when no treatment is necessary.