



Specialty Pharmacy
Psoriasis

Walmart 

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Introduction

Whether you’re actively managing a condition or just looking for information, Walmart Specialty Pharmacy is here to support you every step of the way. We’re also here to make it easy to get your prescriptions, stay on track with your medication refills, and answer any other questions you may have.

We understand that treatment involves more than just medication. So, we’re here to help you understand the lifestyle changes that may make managing your condition easier on a daily basis.

It is always recommended that you talk with your doctor about any changes to treatment plans.

Remember, your health conditions do not define you! It’s okay to ask for help.

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a chronic disorder of the immune system, a condition that usually causes inflammation in the body, usually with breakouts of red, patchy scales on the skin.¹ Although it affects 3 percent of the US adult population or more than 7.5 million adults in the United States,² most cases are mild or moderate forms.

An autoimmune condition with no straightforward cure, psoriasis is treatable with the use of creams, lotions, and ointments³ and by managing common triggers like stress, smoking, and alcohol use.⁴ Moderate to severe disease requires the use of medications taken by mouth or injection.

Here's what you should know about psoriasis.

What causes psoriasis?

While the ultimate cause of psoriasis is unclear,¹ a number of everyday factors have been shown to trigger it. These include:⁵

- Stress
- Skin injuries, like cuts or sunburns
- Infections like strep throat
- Medications like lithium and hydroxychloroquine
- Excessive alcohol use
- Tobacco use
- Cold, dry weather

Researchers have also found that the development of psoriasis is related to a person's immune system and sometimes genetic makeup since the condition is known to run in families.⁵

What are the symptoms & types of psoriasis?

Psoriasis appears differently in different people. The most common signs and symptoms include:³

- Red patches of skin covered with thick, silvery scales
- Small scaling spots (commonly seen in children)
- Dry, cracked skin that may be itchy or painful and may bleed
- Itching, burning, or soreness
- Thickened, pitted, or ridged nails
- Swollen and stiff joints

In addition, psoriasis has been shown to increase a person's risk for a variety of other conditions, such as:⁶

- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disease
- Autoimmune disorders
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Metabolic syndrome
- Inflammatory bowel disease

The presentation of psoriasis symptoms depends on the type of psoriasis. The types include:⁷

- **Plaque psoriasis** is the most common type, affecting about 4 in every 5 people with psoriasis.⁷ Inflamed, raised plaques appear on the skin, the color of which can vary from purple to reddish with white scales. These plaques can appear anywhere and can be itchy and painful.
- **Inverse psoriasis** affects about 1 in every 4 of all people with psoriasis.⁷ It can cause painful and itchy inflamed skin that's deep red and with a smooth, not scaly appearance. It usually affects parts of the body with folded skin, like the armpits, buttocks, and genitals.
- **Psoriatic arthritis** causes swelling, pain, and stiffness in the joints, which can progress to permanent joint damage if left untreated.
- **Guttate psoriasis** often causes inflamed spots that appear as small, round, and red spots anywhere on the body, but most often on the arms, legs, and torso.
- **Pustular psoriasis** causes pustules, or "white, pus-filled, painful bumps" that can be surrounded by inflamed skin, often found on the feet and hands. Pustular psoriasis can also cover larger body areas.
- **Nail psoriasis** affects the fingernails and toenails with unusual color and growth and can also cause them to crumble, loosen, and/or separate.
- **Erythrodermic psoriasis** appears with an intense red color and causes painful shedding of the skin. It's a rare type of psoriasis but also very dangerous, with potentially life-threatening implications.

What can you do to treat psoriasis?

While there is no cure for psoriasis, several treatment options are available to help relieve symptoms and bring about periods of remission. Depending on the type and severity of your condition, your doctor may recommend that you try one or more of the following methods:



Topical treatments usually creams or ointments applied to the skin to help control inflammations, are often the first recommendation.



Systemic treatments or prescription drugs, are often prescribed for moderate to severe cases. These treatments are taken orally, by injection, or by infusion.



Phototherapy known as light therapy, uses ultraviolet light to treat the skin.



Complementary & alternative medicine including chiropractor and acupuncture, is sometimes recommended as a part of a non-Western approach to psoriasis conditions.



Self-care & lifestyle choices can help reduce flare-ups related to stress, smoking, and weather-related triggers. A wide variety of options are available for self-care, including yoga, meditation, drinking less, and more careful skin treatment.

Some specific, helpful applications of self-care include:



Skincare Psoriasis often leaves skin feeling dry and inflamed. Long showers and hot baths tend to increase this dryness, so specialists recommend restricting yourself to one warm—not hot—bath or shower each day. Use gentle soaps, cleaners, and a fragrance-free moisturizer within five minutes after bathing. You can find skincare products to help at Walmart.



Hair self-care is essential for those with scalp psoriasis. Be gentle when brushing, combing, and styling your hair, and take particular care with hot rollers and curling irons. Unfortunately, tight hairstyles, as well as coloring or perming, can also cause psoriasis flare-ups, and they are best avoided.⁹ You can find many helpful, healthy hair care products at Walmart.



Nail care is essential if you have nail psoriasis; the best approach is to keep your nails short and wear gloves often, especially while working with your hands. The use of a fragrance-free moisturizer for sensitive skin is also recommended. You can find helpful nail care products at Walmart.



Diet & nutrition beyond general nutrition may also be recommended. Some specific foods may also help you control flare-ups and prevent other complications like obesity, heart disease, high cholesterol, and diabetes; talk to your doctor or care team for more information. Walmart Grocery offers a large variety of healthy choices.



Over-the-counter (OTC) supplements like Aloe vera gel, apple cider vinegar, Dead Sea or Epsom salts, oats, tea tree oil, turmeric, Oregon grape cream, and capsaicin may each be helpful. Ask your healthcare provider before trying these options or if you have questions about them.



Weight loss may be recommended if you're obese or overweight; shedding some pounds may help you control your psoriasis flare-ups better.¹⁰ And because psoriasis is an inflammatory autoimmune disease, it increases your risk of severe diseases like diabetes and heart disease.⁶ Talk to your care provider about a recommended weight loss program or browse top diet and weight loss products at Walmart.



Quit smoking since tobacco use can have a harmful effect on anyone's health and has also been specifically identified as a trigger for psoriasis. It can increase your chances of getting other serious conditions like cancer.⁶ If you're having trouble stopping on your own, you can find helpful products at Walmart. Ask your pharmacist for recommendations.



Focus on your mental health since psoriasis can be particularly challenging to your mental health.³ Talk to your healthcare provider if you're experiencing depression or similar issues affecting your day-to-day well-being. Finding outlets for stress relief can also help.



Guard against infection since psoriasis is an autoimmune disorder. Make sure you're up to date on your immunizations and vaccines. Wash your hands frequently and avoid close contact with people who may be sick.



Get support since psoriasis can be challenging to your physical, mental, and emotional health and those closest to you are likely to be affected, too. Involve your family in your treatment plan if possible.



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