



Psoriasis Self Care Pointers

Foods/Diet

Please remember that although there is no positive proof that diet affects Psoriasis, the Swiss Psoriasis Foundation has printed this list of food that is acceptable and non acceptable - it is offered for your information. I suggest a trial elimination diet - take the items in your diet now on the not acceptable list for several weeks to see if there is any change in your psoriasis. After several weeks you would start to add in one not acceptable item at a time that you "can't live without" or can't replace with an acceptable item to see how your psoriasis fares.

ACCEPTABLE DIET

Spices and Condiments: rosemary, oregano, thyme, marjoram, laurel, ginger, basil, cardamon, saffron.

Fruits/Veggies: red peppers, capers, onions, garlic, parsley, chives, tomato pulp, fruit vinegars, homemade mayonnaise. Grapes and grape juice, all fresh vegetables. Citrus fruit pulps and fresh citrus juices.

Alcoholic Beverages: cider, fruit wine, beer, whiskey, gin, rum, vodka, fruit brandies

Nuts, Oils, Shortenings: almonds, coconut, pistachios, cashews, sunflower oil, olive oil, corn oil, soybean oil, butter, sunflower margarine, coco butter.

Foods: fish, fish pastes, bread, yogurt, butter and almond cakes, coconut-based products, almond nougat.

NOT ACCEPTABLE DIET:

Spices and Condiments: pepper, cloves, cumin, anise, cinnamon, paprika, mustard, pimento, nutmeg, commercial mayonnaise, ketchup, Tabasco sauce, bouillon cubes and gravies, wine vinegar, herb vinegar, candied orange, lemon peel, curry, commercial condiments, pastry aromas, Worcestershire sauce.

Alcoholic Beverages: All red and white wines, sparkling wines, champagnes, brandy, cognac, sherry, Cinzano, vermouth, port, samos, all egg and nut based liqueurs, Grand Marnier, Cointreau.

Nuts: hazelnuts, walnuts, walnut pastry aroma, PEANUTS, peanut oil, peanut butter.

Foods: prepared meats, sausages, pre-spiced meats, most cold cuts and pates. spice cakes, pickles, pickled spices and peppers, nut-based pastries, chocolate-based products.

Citrus Fruits: fruit peels, orange marmalade, prepared juices, grapefruit, limes, lemon, lemonade, bitter lemons.

MEDICATIONS

There are **Drugs that can worsen Psoriasis!** This is from an article from the American National Psoriasis Foundation, December 1988.

TETRACYCLINES, CAPTOPRIL, CHLORTHALIDONE, GEMFIBROZIL

A Bulgarian study of 113 patients who were treated with tetracyclines showed that 10 experienced marked worsening of their Psoriasis while taking them and in five patients Psoriasis was precipitated after the administration of tetracycline therapy. The authors of the study suggested that tetracyclines be avoided in patients with Psoriasis and in healthy persons with a genetic predisposition for the disorder(i.e. positive family history).

Other recently published medical articles report observations of worsening Psoriasis in patients who took captopril, a blood pressure medication. Also, there were reports of a worsening of Psoriasis following the use of chlorthalidone, a antihyporlipidemic agent.

Other medications that are known to have the potential to worsen Psoriasis are beta-blocking agents (blood pressure medications) lithium (to treat manic depression) indomethacin (a non-storoidal, anti-inflammatory medication commonly used in arthritis, and anti-malarials.

OTHER CARE TIPS

1. STREP THROAT can cause an outbreak of Psoriasis, consult your doctor immediately if you have been exposed to someone with strep and you feel the onset of a sore throat.

2. Use sunscreens liberally and regularly in the summer! Sunlight may be beneficial but **a sunburn can be devastating**. Use caution when exposing yourself to the sun as some medications can make your skin photosensitive. Consult your physician before prolonged exposure to the sun's rays if you are unsure.

3. When washing your hair use a shampoo mild enough to use daily (Cetaphil, Johnson's Baby, etc.) and don't rub your head to dry it, instead pat it dry. Avoid hair dryers that use heat or heated curlers or curling irons – heat dries out your skin!
4. Do apply moisturizing creams all over liberally! BUT - DO NOT RUB your creams or lotions on your skin. Apply them with soft slow strokes in the direction that your hair grows.
5. Do not wear nylon, polyester, or other synthetics next to your skin, it prevents the skin from breathing and does not absorb sweat, lotions or secretions.
6. Do not swim in heavily chlorinated pools, as this can irritate your psoriasis.
7. Do not let your skin become dry in the winter, since this could make your psoriasis worse, and often does. A home humidifier can help. Bathing every other day rather than daily may be helpful for some, but for most, do try to bathe daily. **Water is the only way to hydrate your skin. The trick is to seal the moisture in after bathing!** Soak in a tub for 20 minutes in water that is as cool as you can tolerate comfortably. This helps to de-scale and moisturize your skin. Within three minutes of patting yourself dry apply your oil (olive works well) or vaseline to seal the moisture in. If possible, apply them while you are still wet, its a bit tricky, but can be done.

When bathing, do use a mild soap, not one with detergent or deodorants or too much alkaline. Unscented DOVE, CARESS, NEUTROGENA, PURE and NATURAL, and cleansers with aloe and lanolins are good also.

8. Do not let your skin become scratched or injured in any way - even a mosquito bite can cause a flare up. Wear effective mosquito repellent with DEET on exposed skin surfaces, and spray clothing with Permethrin prior to wearing to keep mosquitoes off of them. When you have an itch you tend to scratch – apply anti-inflammatory creams to bites immediately. If you have bites, use an anti-histamine to minimize the itching and help you to prevent scratching!
9. Do not expose your skin to harsh chemicals - wear rubber gloves. Harsh chemicals include dish detergents. Always wear cotton gloves under the rubber glove and only leave them on for twenty minutes at a time.
10. Do not wash your clothes in heavy detergents, such as TIDE, unless you use very little. Read the instructions on soap containers carefully, and use less soap than called for. It is best to use Ivory snow, rinse twice and in the second rinse put one half cup of vinegar. Also avoid bleaches, heavy chlorination and fabric softeners! If possible hang clothes outside to dry.

