



PSORIASIS

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory disease affecting the skin and not-infrequently the joints. This inherited condition causes considerable distress and affects 1-3% of the United States and European populations, with approximately 25% of patients having moderate to severe disease. Some 40% of psoriatic patients also have psoriatic arthritis. Patients often consider the disease uncomfortable and disfiguring, causing substantial problems in their everyday life and resulting in a diminished quality of life.

Although appearance may not be an issue for patients with minimal disease or with psoriatic plaques in covered sites, many patients are embarrassed by the redness and scaling which lead to psychological problems. These problems are especially troublesome, when psoriasis occurs on the face, scalp, hands, nails and genitalia. Clothing may not cover the areas, and patients become concerned by their altered appearance.

Even though there are a variety of topical and systemic treatments, which can sometimes lead to complete clearance or otherwise significant improvement of the skin, the long-term management of psoriasis is complicated by treatment-related limitations, while fewer than half of those affected cutaneously find their treatment highly satisfactory. Psoriasis has, therefore, recently become a focus for biological therapies that have already demonstrated beneficial effects on moderate to severe disease, affecting both the skin and joints, with acceptable safety and tolerability profiles, while the armamentarium of topical formulas is constantly developing.

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