

Disease Report #REP-202505-FDNI

Report Details

Report Number: REP-202505-FDNI

Date: 19 May 2025

Disease: psoriasis

Diagnosis and Recommendations

Health Report: Psoriasis

1. Medical Description:

Psoriasis is a chronic, autoimmune disease that affects the skin. It causes rapid buildup of skin cells, resulting in thick, red, scaly patches. These patches, called plaques, can be itchy, painful, and unsightly. The severity of psoriasis varies greatly from person to person, ranging from mild to severe. The immune system mistakenly attacks healthy skin cells, causing rapid cell growth and inflammation. This process is thought to be triggered by a combination of genetic predisposition and environmental factors. While primarily affecting the skin, severe psoriasis can have systemic implications, affecting joints (psoriatic arthritis) and potentially increasing the risk of other health problems.

2. Common Symptoms:

Plaques: Raised, red, inflamed patches of skin covered with silvery-white scales. These can appear anywhere on the body but are commonly found on the elbows, knees, scalp, lower back, and face.

Itching: Intense itching is a frequent symptom, which can lead to skin irritation and secondary infections.

Burning sensation: Some individuals experience a burning or stinging sensation in affected

areas.

Pain: Especially prevalent in psoriatic arthritis, but can also be experienced in severely affected skin areas.

Nail changes: *Pitting, thickening, discoloration, or separation of the nails from the nail bed (onycholysis).*

Swollen, painful joints (psoriatic arthritis): Affects approximately 30% of individuals with psoriasis.

3. Causes and Risk Factors:

The exact cause of psoriasis is unknown, but it's believed to be a complex interplay of genetic and environmental factors.

Genetics: *A family history of psoriasis significantly increases the risk.*

Immune system dysfunction: The immune system attacks healthy skin cells, leading to rapid cell turnover.

Environmental triggers: *Infections (e.g., strep throat), stress, injuries to the skin, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, obesity, and certain medications can trigger or worsen psoriasis.*

4. Preventive Measures:

While psoriasis can't be completely prevented, managing risk factors can help reduce the likelihood of developing or worsening the condition:

1. **Stress management:** *Practice stress-reducing techniques like yoga, meditation, or deep breathing exercises.*
2. **Smoking cessation:** *Quit smoking to reduce inflammation and the severity of psoriasis.*
3. **Alcohol moderation:** *Limit alcohol consumption as it can exacerbate the condition.*
4. **Weight management:** *Maintain a healthy weight to reduce inflammation and improve overall health.*
5. **Skin care:** *Avoid harsh soaps and chemicals, moisturize regularly, and protect skin from sun exposure (although controlled sun exposure can sometimes be beneficial).*

5. Diagnostic Tests:

Diagnosis of psoriasis is typically made through a physical examination of the skin. Further tests are rarely needed, but may include:

Skin biopsy: A small skin sample is taken to examine under a microscope, confirming the

diagnosis and ruling out other skin conditions.

Blood tests: *May be used to rule out other conditions and assess for psoriatic arthritis.*

6. Suggested Treatments and Medications:

Treatment varies depending on the severity and location of the psoriasis. Options include:

Topical treatments: Corticosteroids creams, vitamin D analogues, retinoids, calcineurin inhibitors.

Phototherapy (light therapy): *UVB or PUVA light therapy can slow down skin cell growth.*

Systemic medications: Methotrexate, cyclosporine, biologics (e.g., tumor necrosis factor inhibitors, interleukin inhibitors), apremilast (a phosphodiesterase-4 inhibitor). Biologics are highly effective but can have significant side effects.

Targeted systemic therapy: *Small molecule drugs targeting specific pathways involved in the development of psoriasis.*

7. Lifestyle and Dietary Recommendations:

Healthy diet: A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can support overall health and may help manage inflammation.

Hydration: *Drink plenty of water to keep skin hydrated and reduce dryness.*

Regular exercise: Physical activity can help manage stress and improve overall well-being.

Skin moisturization: *Use mild, fragrance-free moisturizers regularly to keep the skin hydrated.*

Avoid triggering factors: Identify and avoid personal triggers like stress, certain foods, or medications.

Disclaimer: This information is for educational purposes only and should not be considered medical advice. It is crucial to consult a dermatologist or healthcare professional for diagnosis and personalized treatment of psoriasis. They can assess your specific condition and recommend the most appropriate course of action.