

# PSORIASIS IS MORE THAN MY SKIN

## I KNOW WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR, DO YOU?

I never let my psoriasis stop me working as a DJ. Up to 4 in 10 people with psoriasis develop psoriatic arthritis, which can lead to joint damage and disability. Now we're finding a path forward together.

**ASK YOUR DERMATOLOGIST**  
about how psoriasis can affect  
more than your skin.

[www.morethanmyskin.co.nz](http://www.morethanmyskin.co.nz)



# ***PSORIASIS IS MORE THAN*** **A SKIN CONDITION**

Psoriasis appears on the skin as raised, scaly red patches. Additional joint pain, however, could be a sign that psoriatic arthritis has developed.

Psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are closely related; in fact they are both manifestations of the same underlying condition: psoriatic disease.

Psoriatic disease can affect different areas of the body, including the skin, nails, palms and soles, the scalp and the skeletal system (including the spine and joints).

## **UP TO 4 IN 10 PEOPLE WHO HAVE PSORIASIS GO ON TO DEVELOP PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS**



Psoriasis usually appears on the skin first, sometimes years before the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis begin but, more rarely, psoriatic arthritis can exist on its own or before skin symptoms.

**People with psoriasis that affects the scalp or nails, or causes inflammation of the skin in the buttock area, may be at increased risk of developing psoriatic arthritis.**

# KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF *PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS*

Psoriatic arthritis is an inflammatory disease of the joints associated with psoriasis. Even though it's called 'arthritis', joint pain isn't the only thing to look out for. Signs and symptoms of psoriatic arthritis include:

- **Pain in joints such as the ankles, knees or elbows**
- **Inflamed, tender or stiff joints**
- **Back pain near the spine**
- **Morning stiffness**
- **Sausage-like inflammation of whole fingers and toes**
- **Changes in nails**

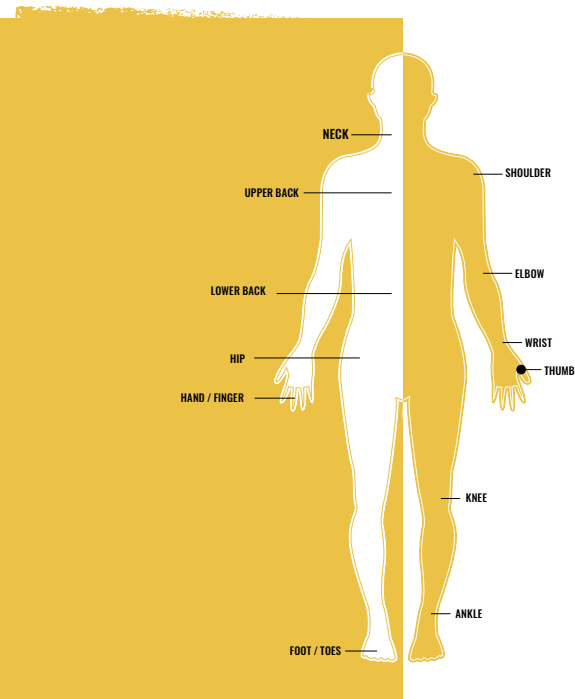
**PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS MAY LEAD TO PERMANENT DAMAGE OF JOINTS IF LEFT UNTREATED**

## PSORIASIS AND PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS ARE MANIFESTATIONS OF PSORIATIC DISEASE *A SYSTEMIC AUTOIMMUNE CONDITION*

**Psoriatic disease is a collective term for multiple manifestations of psoriasis which can affect the skin (including scalp and nails), joints and spine.**

It is an autoimmune condition, where the immune system is overactive and targets the body's own healthy tissue as if it is fighting a foreign infection. The body's response to the attack is inflammation or swelling.

# JOINT AND SPINE AREAS CAN BE AFFECTED *BY PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS*



Psoriatic disease is systemic – meaning it can act throughout the body – but the immune system typically targets the skin cells, which results in skin plaques of psoriasis, and cells in the joints, causing the swelling and pain of psoriatic arthritis.

The inflammation associated with psoriatic disease increases the risk of other conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The immune response in psoriasis can be triggered by environmental, infectious or genetic factors.

Today, there is a range of management options available for psoriatic disease. Please be aware of your symptoms to improve the dialogue with your doctor.

# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## *KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR*

You have an important role to play in managing your condition. Know more about psoriatic disease and psoriatic arthritis, listen to your body and don't be afraid to seek advice.

You can check for symptoms of your psoriatic disease, by answering the following questions:



**Have you ever had a swollen joint (or joints)?**

**YES NO**

☐ ☐

**Has a doctor ever told you that you have arthritis?**

**YES NO**

☐ ☐

**Do your fingernails or toenails have holes or pits?**

**YES NO**

☐ ☐

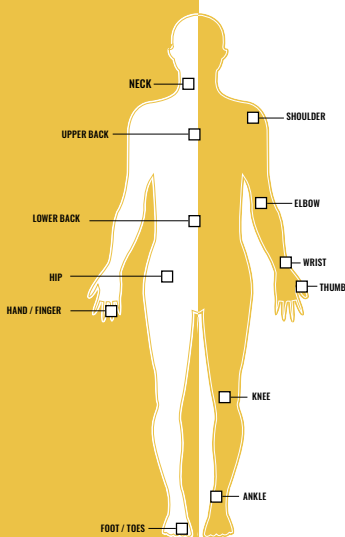
**Have you had pain in your heel?**

**YES NO**

☐ ☐

**Have you had a finger or toe that was completely swollen and painful for no apparent reason?**

**YES NO**

☐ ☐

Mark on this diagram where your body feels tender or sore. You can take this information to your doctor and work together on a plan to care for your psoriatic disease.

# TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR *EARLY ON*

It is best to begin managing psoriatic disease early, as it can cause permanent problems up to disability. Please refer to your doctor for advice on your particular case.

## TIPS TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT

**Write down your symptoms** – Why not use the tracker and questionnaire in this leaflet?

**List any medications you're taking** – It's important that your dermatologist has the full picture.

**Any questions?** Write them down in advance so you can make sure they're all answered.

**Be open in conversation** – And don't be afraid to ask your dermatologist if anything's unclear.

**Support** – Why not take a relative or friend with you?

**ASK YOUR DERMATOLOGIST**  
**about how psoriasis can affect**  
**more than your skin.**

## **KEEP MONITORING THE SYMPTOMS OF YOUR PSORIATIC DISEASE**

It's important to keep monitoring the symptoms of your psoriatic disease even after agreeing a treatment plan with your doctor. It is helpful to plan for regular check-ins to keep on top of any changes in your symptoms and to discuss them with a doctor as soon as possible.

**FIND AN INTERACTIVE, DOWNLOADABLE VERSION OF  
THE SYMPTOM QUESTIONNAIRE, AND MORE, ONLINE**

**[www.morethanmyskin.co.nz](http://www.morethanmyskin.co.nz)**



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