

Conversations on skincare



Focus on **psoriasis**

TRAINING FOR THE PHARMACY TEAM



More than **120 million people worldwide** suffer from psoriasis¹, which is a chronic, relapsing, immune skin condition. Psoriasis occurs when the skin matures too quickly. This leads to red, flaky, crusty patches of skin covered with silvery looking scales that can sometimes become itchy or sore. Living with psoriasis can have a profound impact on a customer's physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing.

Psoriasis is a complicated condition that is unique to each individual. Every psoriasis sufferer has different ways in which they cope with their condition, and the amount of skin affected by psoriasis can differ markedly from patient to patient. It is important that the pharmacy team can recognise psoriasis and understand the impact it can have on someone's life, and how they can offer the best advice.

This training looks at:

How pharmacy can make a difference to customers with psoriasis through **effective customer conversations**.

Look out for these logos throughout the booklet:

-  Tips and information to aid effective conversations.
-  When further advice/an intervention may be necessary.



On completing this training you will be able to:

- ✓ Identify and recognise psoriasis sufferers
- ✓ Offer advice on managing psoriasis triggers
- ✓ Understand and recommend the appropriate treatment
- ✓ Explain how Dermalex can help manage the symptoms of psoriasis.

Effective conversations

To truly make a difference to customers with psoriasis you must first make an effort to understand them, their concerns and frustrations. Psoriasis sufferers may be embarrassed about their appearance and try to hide affected areas. Consider this when having conversations with customers. Remember they may not be aware that there are products available OTC that can help manage the symptoms.

To help you develop your confidence in conversations with customers about psoriasis, we will use a familiar questioning tool to show you how you can apply the knowledge of this condition in practice:

W

who suffers from psoriasis?

W

what are the symptoms?

H

how long have they had it?

A

has any action been taken?

M

what other medication are they on?

Who suffers from psoriasis?

Psoriasis can occur at any age, although there seem to be two peaks: from the late teens to early thirties, and between the ages of 50 and 60.



Age

Two peaks when psoriasis starts to occur: late teens to 30s, and 50s-60s



Gender

Men and women are equally affected



Genetics

Family history

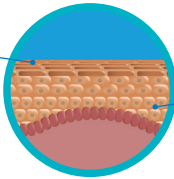


Assure your customer that it is a common condition and help is available, so they needn't worry about discussing it.

What are the symptoms?

Healthy skin

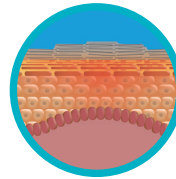
The epidermis is the thin, outer layer of the skin



The dermis is the lower layer of the skin

Skin is a barrier made of water, protein, lipids and minerals that protects our body from the external environment. Skin renews itself every 21-28 days by growing new cells which slowly mature as they rise to the top layer of the epidermis and eventually shed naturally.

Psoriasis skin



In psoriasis sufferers, skin cells multiply too fast, every 3-7 days. This overproduction of skin cells breaks down the skin barrier allowing:

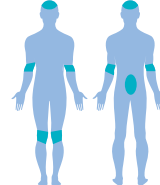
- moisture to escape
- build up of plaques of thickened, scaling skin which can become red and itchy

Symptoms



Psoriasis symptoms vary depending on the type of psoriasis. Common symptoms of plaque psoriasis - the most common variety of the condition - include areas of red, inflamed skin often covered with loose, silver-coloured scales. These plaques may be itchy and painful and sometimes crack and bleed.

Body area



Psoriasis can affect any area of the skin and, while most cases are mild, some people may have a large area of their body affected. Common areas are the elbows, knees, scalp and lower back. Many psoriasis sufferers also get it on their scalp.



If psoriasis patients show any of the following, refer them to the pharmacist or their GP:

- Signs of bacterial infection (increased pain, swelling, redness, tenderness, or heat)
- Skin that is more irritated or inflamed than usual
- Psoriasis that is spreading to larger areas of the body

How long have you had the symptoms for?

The exact cause of psoriasis is unknown, however it is characterised by periods of remission (good days) and flare-ups (bad days), often in response to certain triggers.



You can make a difference by helping customers to identify potential triggers that worsen their symptoms. Advise customers to keep a diary to monitor patterns of psoriasis flare-ups.



Injury to the skin



Alcohol (in excess)



Smoking



Stress



Certain medicines



Throat infections



Hormonal changes
(such as puberty and
the menopause)



Refer a customer to the pharmacist or their GP if they report their condition is worsening

Real life case study:



“Unfortunately I’ve suffered with psoriasis from the age of 10 and I’ve found growing up with this condition really hard. At an age where I wanted to fit in, I stood out because of the psoriasis which appeared on my face, arms, legs and scalp.”

Has any **Action** been taken?

Psoriasis cannot be cured, but by avoiding triggers and using appropriate treatment, it can be managed.



You could have a conversation about how they have been managing their condition so far – many sufferers will have had the condition diagnosed by their GP and may have been prescribed treatments. Some customers may have tried moisturisers to relieve the dryness.

Depending on the severity of their symptoms, the customer might have tried any of the treatments below for psoriasis: Treatments include:

OTC topical treatments

- Coal tar
- Emollients
- Dermalex Psoriasis

Topical treatments on prescription

- Vitamin D analogues
- Dithranol
- Corticosteroids

For more severe cases (under medical supervision)

- Phytotherapy (UV light therapy)
- Systemic (oral or injected) prescription medication

Are you taking any other **Medicines**?

Remember to ask if they are using any prescription medication for their psoriasis – some people may be prescribed creams/ointments or gels containing vitamin D analogues, dithranol or corticosteroids.

If the customer is taking any medication – either prescribed or over the counter (including herbal products) – you should refer them to the pharmacist. Certain medicines, such as lithium (for psychiatric disorders) and some antimalarials may trigger the psoriasis.

Note: Dermalex Psoriasis can be used alongside other treatments.

Real life case study:



“I have tried everything available to me, from steroid creams to over-the-counter emollients, and UVB light therapy to prescription drugs. Some treatments work for a while but, in my opinion, they always seem to lose their potency or I have to stop them due to side effects.”

Recommending Dermalex Psoriasis

Dermalex Psoriasis is an OTC treatment that reduces psoriasis symptoms by normalising skin cell production and maturation time. Dermalex is also available in a new psoriasis scalp gel as one in two people who have psoriasis also suffer from scalp psoriasis.

Dermalex uniquely offers an effective yet tolerable treatment for psoriasis:

- ✓ **EFFECTIVE:** Reduces itching and scaling from two weeks²
- ✓ **TOLERABLE:** Does not contain steroids, coal tar, vitamin D3 analogues, vitamin A derivatives, sulphates, or colourants



	Dermalex Psoriasis	Dermalex Scalp Psoriasis
Who is it for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults and children 14Y+ Mild to moderate psoriasis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults and children 6Y+ Mild to moderate scalp psoriasis
How to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the cream twice daily to cleansed skin Massage gently into the affected areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the gel twice daily to the affected area. Do not rinse The gel is not visible in your hair and does not stain clothes, or colour or cause depigmentation of the skin

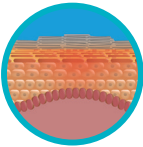
Real life case study:



“ Vincent discovered the Dermalex Psoriasis range when searching for steroid-free alternatives online: “I couldn’t believe the results I had with Dermalex; the inflammation, redness and flaky skin just calmed right down and my skin felt much less itchy. Using Dermalex has drastically improved my confidence and the appearance of my skin and I don’t leave the house without a tube with me. Not having to worry about flare ups gives me the self-confidence to get on with my day! ”

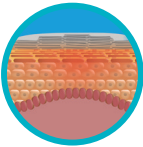
How does **Dermalex Psoriasis** work?

Psoriasis skin

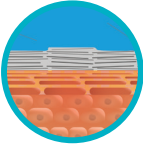


Overproduction of skin cells breaks the skin barrier allowing: moisture to escape, and the build up of plaques of thickened, scaling skin which can become red and itchy.

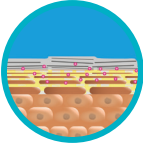
Dermalex Psoriasis mode of action



1) Repairs: skin barrier function. Dermalex's unique **MagneoLite complex™** creates a semi-occlusive protective layer on top of the skin which locks in moisture and repairs the skin's barrier function, preventing moisture from escaping.

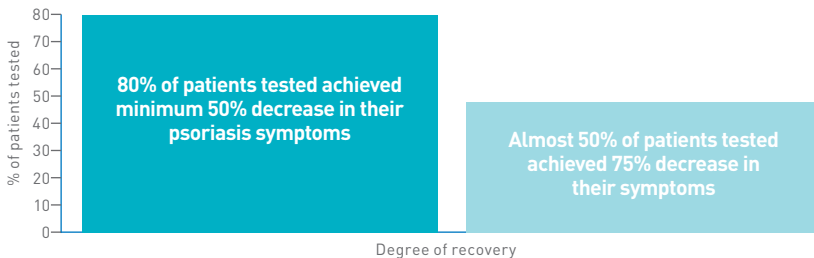


2) Regulates: skin cell growth. Dermalex's carefully developed and unique complex assists in the shedding of the excessive skin cells, reducing the typical scaling of psoriasis skin.



3) Reduces: redness and irritation. Dermalex helps provide an ionic environment that stimulates the skin's own repair mechanism and has a healing effect on the skin.

By accelerating the barrier repair and regulating the skin's proliferation, Dermalex is clinically proven to relieve psoriasis symptoms, without the need for steroids.*



On average, patients had 71% improvement of the symptoms

*Based on Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) studies, which is a widely used tool for the measurement of the severity of psoriasis.

Tips and advice

As psoriasis is a lifelong condition, sufferers may feel alone. Having a conversation about their condition and showing you understand may be a great help. You could suggest they:

- Try and avoid anything they know triggers a flare-up
- Use any treatment (prescribed or OTC) as directed, and keep on using it even if the symptoms improve, to help prevent flare-ups
- Have regular reviews with their GP about their treatment
- Try and look after their general health by eating a healthy balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight and exercising regularly
- Visit the Psoriasis Association website if they want more information (www.psoriasis-association.org.uk)

To provide a good service, you could ask them to pop back and let you know how they are getting on with the product. This shows you are interested and will encourage them back into the pharmacy, giving you an opportunity to discuss any other healthcare needs they may have.

Real life case study:



To see more real life stories, scan this code

“My daughter, who also suffers from psoriasis, told me about her success with using Dermalex Repair Scalp Psoriasis and so I popped down to my local pharmacy on her recommendation to give it a go. Since using it I’ve noticed a big difference in the appearance and sensitivity of my skin. My scalp is so much calmer, and the gel formula is very easy to apply – I usually use it after a shower. Dermalex keeps my scalp moisturised and does a great job of soothing the itchiness. I’m glad to have found a treatment which puts my mind at ease, especially in the run up to winter, when my condition would usually worsen, leaving my skin tight and chapped.”

MA, 55 years, Yorkshire, UK

References

1. https://www.psoriasis.org/cure_known_statistics
2. Open Label Clinical Study into the overall efficacy of Dermalex Psoriasis Cream, Dr. K. Fritz e.a., 2008 Germany

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