Parental Guide to Psoriasis

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Helpful Information for Parents of Children With Psoriasis

Treatment for children with mild psoriasis often involves sunlight. For moderate psoriasis broad-band and narrow-band UVB phototherapy treatments can be used. We will be getting into a parents guide to psoriasis.

Teens can also be exposed to UVB phototherapy, but oral medications are problematic because they may react badly with teenage hormonal fluctuations. Topical steroids also need to be applied with caution because they can be absorbed too fast. Systemic medications are not usually prescribed to children and teens, but if the psoriasis is severe, systemic medications may be recommended.

First Steps

If your child has psoriasis, learn everything you can about the disease. Involve your child in the learning process. Work with your child to develop a treatment plan that they can follow. Teach them that psoriatic skin cells grow too fast and psoriasis is not their fault. It is not contagious, but it is a condition that will come and go. Encourage them to ask questions at medical appointments. The more they can explain psoriasis to others, the less they'll have to worry about it. Practicing a pat response with them to use if people stare or make rude comments will build their confidence. Given that kids can be mean, they will be better equipped to deal with bullying in the schoolyard, too.

Helping your child communicate effectively about their psoriasis and their emotions is as important as helping them manage the physical symptoms of the disease. Provide an open environment for them to express their disappointments and frustrations. Listen to them. Encourage them to talk to someone like a mentor or family member who won't dismiss their feelings. Connect your child with other children who have psoriasis. Having a peer to talk to will help them feel less isolated. Building this support network will help alleviate their stress and yours, too.

Treatment Plan

Develop a treatment plan as a team with your doctor(s). Including your child in decisions will provide some measure of control for them over their psoriasis. Knowing what the treatment plan is may also help them comply with it. But be prepared for them to be resentful of the treatment plan when they'd rather be doing something else or if the treatment wasn't effective.

Learn what triggers your child's psoriasis. Encourage them to be mindful of those triggers by keeping a journal. Suggest meditation or relaxation techniques. Ensure your family eats a healthy diet and gets regular exercise. Help your child be active in sports and other leisure activities. These activities will build their strength, improve their immune system and increase their self-esteem.