Be Flare-Up Free This Summer

by BRENDA VANTA

Enjoying the Summer Sun With Psoriasis

In most cases, symptoms of psoriasis improve during the summer – from skin lesions to arthritis associated with this condition. In order to fully enjoy the warm weather, you should still be careful to avoid some triggers, such as insect bites, skin injuries and sunburns. Let's take a look at psoriasis and sun exposure.

Exposure to Sun in Moderation

Generally speaking, sun improves the symptoms of psoriasis, and the ultraviolet rays are particularly beneficial because they decrease inflammation and promote skin repair. This is the reason why phototherapy is sometimes prescribed by doctors for this condition.

However, you shouldn’t spend more than 20 minutes in the sun, without sunscreen for two reasons: firstly, too much sun can cause sunburn which can aggravate psoriasis or cause flare-ups. Secondly, some medications used for psoriasis treatment make your skin more sensitive to sun and you may experience symptom aggravation again.

Dermatologists recommend sun protective screens with SPF 30. To avoid any skin irritation, use a sunscreen without too many chemicals (see the ingredient list) and one that is fragrance free.

Your Skin Also Loves the Water

The water from the ocean or sea is beneficial for your skin. It contains various minerals and salt, which have an anti-inflammatory effect. The water helps repair the skin faster, and also removes the dead tissue. Daily warm baths can soothe your skin, as well. You can add oil, colloidal oatmeal or Epsom salt in the water.

The opposite is true when it comes to swimming pools, because the water contains chlorine and other disinfectants. That’s why you should avoid pools, and swim in the ocean, seas or salty lakes.

Keep Your Skin Moist

Warm weather and the air conditioner can dehydrate your skin, leading to itching, redness, soreness, and scaling. To avoid dry, irritated skin, use a lotion or a cream a few times a day.

Different products are available, depending on how dry your skin is. Ointments are typically thicker than lotions and are the best moisturizers if you skin is very dry. Lotions are thinner, while the creams are somewhere in between ointments and lotions. You don’t need to buy expensive brands- petroleum jelly is a good choice when your skin is very dry.

Avoid Skin Irritants

Insect bites can irritate the skin and can cause infections, which can trigger flare-ups. Other small skin injuries (cuts) can worsen symptoms as well. Use a natural insect repellant or make your own with natural ingredients like sage, rosemary and lavender.

Clothes can irritate the skin as well. Choose loose, soft clothes made from cotton, rather than synthetic materials.

Avoid harsh products like deodorant soaps, some laundry soaps, or lotions with alcohol. Use green products as often as you can. They are not just environmental friendly, but they are for sensitive skin as well.