Can the Soap I Use Help?

by LARA WYATT

Soap for Psoriasis: How Your Psoriasis Could Respond to Soaps

A psoriasis flare-up is stressful enough without having to worry about what soap to use when you're showering. However, it is an important consideration to make as certain types can irritate and aggravate already inflamed and sore skin.

First, we'll discuss the differences in using regular soap and a soap that is psoriasis-friendly, soap vs. lotion (i.e., a body wash), psoriasis and exfoliation, and soap options worth looking into.

Are Everyday Soaps Good for Psoriasis?

There are many different types of soaps for sensitive skin from your everyday brands like Dove, Palmolive, and Nivea. Depending on the level of sensitivity that your skin has, these soaps may be just fine for you.

However, it is advised to use your everyday soaps on other parts of your body not impacted by a skin condition, or during the times where you're not dealing with a flare-up.

From personal experience, I'd avoid using anything that isn't purely natural based (or prescribed from your doctor) on areas that are affected by psoriasis or eczema.

Many of your everyday soaps use ingredients that aren't purely natural, and since there's no direct link to what causes or interacts with psoriasis or eczema, I'd be hesitant to apply non-natural ingredients to the already irritated skin.

What's the Difference Between Soap for Psoriasis and Lotion for Psoriasis?

It's very much a personal preference between whether you use soap or lotion. Soaps tend to be able to contain more exfoliating qualities than lotion does, but the stronger types of products tend to be available in the lotion style, for example, pine tar lotions.

Is Exfoliating Soap a Good Idea When Dealing with Psoriasis or Eczema?

With psoriasis and eczema, you're dealing with incredibly fast skin production, leaving you with layers of skin that have been produced and flake away quickly.

It can be a good idea to remove these layers of dead skin, but the way you do it should be taken into consideration. You don't want to use a harsh exfoliator; you just want something very gentle – which is where the concept of natural remedies comes in.

There are many scrubs that you can make yourself at home, otherwise, you can find some ready-made products

with natural exfoliation.

Also, consider only exfoliating around once a week. You don't want to irritate your skin any more than it already is, so just giving it a freshen up occasionally will be fine.

Soaps for Psoriasis: What Are Your Options?

Let's talk about the types of soap that are good for psoriasis and eczema. As someone who deals with flare-ups of this nature on a regular basis, here's a selection of soap types that I use to minimize the pain associated with psoriasis and eczema.

Olive Oil–Based Soap

Olive oil has the ability to keep skin nice and moisturized thanks to the fact that it features monounsaturated fatty acids. Using an olive oil–based soap can prevent your skin from constantly flaking and calm down the redness that you experience while suffering from psoriasis or eczema.

The great thing about many olive oil-based soaps is that they don't have a powerful odor like other psoriasis soaps can have.

Next page: More soaps for psoriasis options.

Pine Tar–Based Soap

This type of soap does have quite a strong odour, which some people really like and some don't. However, the positive effects that soaps with pine tar can have should outweigh the scent of the soap.

I've personally found that pine tar soap works really well when I'm experiencing a psoriasis outbreak around my hairline and my neck. It slows the flaking of the plaques and also helps to relieve the itch and burn sensations I often feel in the areas where my neck bends and stretches.

Coconut Oil-Based Soap

Coconut oil has excellent moisturising qualities. It helps to lock in the moisture in your skin and prevent your skin from drying out and flaking, which is a common problem with psoriasis.

A coconut oil soap is a great way to ensure you're locking in moisture in your skin, while also being able to get away from the strong scented soaps like pine tar. It contains a fatty acid, lauric acid, which helps to prevent inflammation.

Aloe-Based Soap

Aloe vera is a great treatment for psoriasis as you can apply it directly to the skin to help reduce redness and moisturise the area. A soap with aloe vera also features the same qualities.

There are also aloe vera soaps that feature calendula. The calendula in the soap is suggested to help promote skin firmness and heals things like scratches.

Himalayan Salt Soap

Although salt sounds like something harsh to put on your skin, Himalayan salt is said to contain many minerals. These minerals are suggested to heal eczema flare-ups and draw fluid from blisters while also calming the burning and itching that is often associated with it.

Himalayan salt soaps are also often made with different types of moisturising agents that can leave your skin feeling soft and smooth, while promoting the retention of skin moisturisation - something essential when you're trying to overcome an eczema or psoriasis flare-up.

Oatmeal Soap

First of all, with oatmeal soap, you might want to look for a soap that has finely ground oatmeal, not oatmeal chunks, to avoid blocking your shower drain.

Oatmeal soap is said to reduce the itch and redness associated with psoriasis and eczema.

There's also a variety of types of oatmeal soaps or products. You can get oatmeal bath soaks or lotions as well. Find a product that works for your needs.

Coal Tar Soap

Coal tar soap is a very old remedy and it's known to be good for reducing redness, itching and flaking of psoriasis patches.

If your skin is super sensitive, it may not be the best idea to use coal tar as sometimes it can be quite harsh on the skin, however, the benefits of using it can be quite good as well.

Coal tar soaps are one of the types of soaps that comes with a very strong odour. However, from personal experience, it's worth putting up with the smell to reap the benefits of using a coal tar product.

Soaps for Psoriasis to Make at Home

You can try making remedies for yourself at home, because, after all, who knows your skin and what it can handle better than yourself.

You can always head to Pinterest to gather some inspiration and find what other people are using to make their own soaps and lotions, and then just fine-tune the ingredients to get a solution that works well for you.

Think of stocking ingredients like coconut oil, olive oil, essential oils, and the likes. This way you can experiment with the different types of ingredients you'll find in many psoriasis and eczema remedies until you find a solution that might work for you.

My Personal Experience With Using Soaps for Psoriasis

No one solution will work for everyone. As suggested by any health expert you talk to, there's no set in stone cause or cure for psoriasis. It's really up to us to try out the variety of options available to us, to find a way to best manage our flare-ups.

Here in New Zealand, I've been lucky enough to find an abundance of different types of soap products to try to keep my psoriasis flare-ups at bay, and I have found a handful that has really helped.

Here's just a few that I swap between depending on the severity of the flare-up:

Sabun's Eczema Rescue Soap

I stumbled across this soap in an organic food store, and just had to try it. It's olive oil based, and is absolutely wonderful. There's no strong odour, and it feels super light to rub into your skin. There's no gross sticky residue, and I really do feel like it's eased many of my minor outbreaks.

Ego Naturals Pinetarsol

This one I use for more severe flare-ups. It's got a very strong smell, but I personally don't mind it (especially if it's going to work).

All I do is apply a bit directly to my skin and wash it off, or ad a few caps to a warm bath and soak in it for awhile. It really does reduce the redness and calm the itch that I experience. The flaking calms down dramatically too.

Coconut Oil Soaps

So I haven't actually tried making a coconut oil soap bar yet, but I can vouch for the effectiveness of using even coconut oil in the shower.

I'll apply coconut oil to the affected areas and let it sink in for awhile, and then just rinse it off before I step out of the shower. For me, it takes the edge off the flaking of psoriasis plaques rather than reducing redness, but even that is a win in my books.

I'd really encourage you to experiment with the different options out there, and talk to your doctor about the wide array of products that they may be able to help you with accessing.