4 Ways to Treat Palmoplantar Psoriasis

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Palmoplantar Psoriasis: How the Hands and Feet Are Affected

As is the case with many types of psoriasis, flare-ups can appear on many different parts of the body. One type that is generally found on the palms of a person’s hands, or on the soles of their feet, is palmoplantar psoriasis. The condition presents itself as red palms and soles, as well as the presence of dry skin with thick cracks.

There are two other types of psoriasis that are quite similar: plantar psoriasis and palmar psoriasis. Plantar psoriasis tends to only affect the soles of the feet, while palmar psoriasis tends to only affect the palms. Hence, palmoplantar psoriasis is a combination of the two, as it often affects both the palms and the soles.

Who Is at Risk for Palmoplantar Psoriasis?

Although it can affect people of any age, there are certain groups of people who may be more susceptible to the skin condition. There’s a connection to genes and family history. It's far more likely that if someone in your family has or has had psoriasis, you will end up with one form or another throughout your life. According to Healthline, there are three genes associated with psoriasis. If you have any number of these, you are more likely to develop psoriasis symptoms throughout your life. The genes are NAT9, RAPTOR and SLC9A3R1.

There’s also a higher chance of someone suffering from palmoplantar psoriasis if they have suffered from certain health conditions. This can include strep throat, type 1 diabetes and even thyroid disease. Smokers also increase their chances of developing palmoplantar psoriasis due to the fact that smoking affects the immune system.

What Causes Palmoplantar Psoriasis?

It’s hard to pinpoint for sure what causes palmoplantar psoriasis, as it is with other types of psoriasis. We do know that all types of psoriasis are autoimmune disorders that result in the rapid reproduction of skin cells. Palmoplantar psoriasis does the same thing.

It’s suggested that environmental factors that many people encounter on a daily basis may have something to do with an increased chance of a flare-up. This could include exposure to cleaning products, dust, pollen and smoke.

There’s also a connection to weather conditions. So, if the temperature has been hot and humid, or cold and dry, there is a chance your skin may suffer from psoriasis. Stress is also a trigger, as inflammation is your body’s direct response to stress. If you are prone to psoriasis, then inflammation of the skin is the natural response in a time of stress. As with other forms of psoriasis, it can appear after an injury to the skin. Things like cuts on your palms or soles of your feet may also trigger a palmoplantar psoriasis flare-up.

What Are the Symptoms?

There are quite a few symptoms connected to this type of psoriasis. Your hands and feet will tend to be in a

certain amount of pain. You'll get patches of raised and thick skin that can appear quite red and dry. Often your hands will crack in the creases where there is movement in your hand. This can be quite sore and irritable.

Other symptoms include itchy and burning skin, as well as bleeding if you scratch at your skin. If you suffer from palmoplantar psoriasis, there is a chance that you may also deal with nail psoriasis. This is where your nails may thicken or discolor over time.

Ways to treat and Manage Palmoplantar Psoriasis

There are a variety of ways to treat palmoplantar psoriasis, including medicated options and natural options. It's usually a case of trying different types of treatments to find an option that will work for you.

Phototherapy

Phototherapy is an option to consider if you are dealing with psoriasis. The gist of phototherapy is that the affected skin has ultraviolet light beamed onto it consistently over a period of time. There are different types of phototherapy to consider, which can even include sunlight. The ultraviolet light is able to slow the rapid growth of skin cells, which can help reduce the appearance of palmoplantar psoriasis flare-ups.

Topical Ointments

Topical ointments are another option to look at. Depending on the severity of the palmoplantar psoriasis you are dealing with, the topical ointment prescribed will differ. There are vitamin D ointments, steroids, coal tar products, plus many more. They all help to slow the growth of skin cells, while also helping to ease the pain, itching and redness associated with the psoriasis. Coal tar is a nice natural option to try if you do not want to jump straight to the steroids. However, always listen to the advice from your healthcare professional.

Keep Your Skin Hydrated

Keeping your hands and feet moisturized is key to aid the recovery of your hands and feet. Because they are parts of the body you cannot avoid using on a daily basis, keeping them moisturized and protected is essential. Each night, cover the soles of your feet in moisturizer and then pop on cotton socks to sleep in. Your feet will soak up the moisturizer while you sleep. If you do this often, you should see improvement. This is the same with your hands. Keep an unscented hand lotion on you, whether you work at a computer or outside, and moisturize as often as you can. Keeping your hands moisturized will help prevent those sore and painful looking cracks in your skin.

Reduce Stress

Most of all, keep calm. Stress is not only a trigger for psoriasis, but it can make it worse once you are dealing with it, too. Take time to run some baths and pour a bit of coal tar in to soak and relax. No psoriasis flare-up should last forever, so wait it out, follow your doctor's advice and you will be out the other side in no time.