Sally’s Story

by MARLENE WALLACE

The other day, I had coffee with a good friend who suffers from psoriasis. I asked her about some of her experiences over the years as well as if she had any hints for others who have this same skin condition.

Sally was first diagnosed with psoriasis at the age of three. At that time, the only place she had flaky, scaly patches was in her scalp. As she got older, her skin gradually worsened. When Sally was in her late 20’s and early 30’s, plaque patches began to appear in other parts of her body including her knees, arms, elbows and trunk. All of these are very common areas for psoriasis to appear.

There is a very strong familial component with psoriasis. Sally’s maternal grandfather had it so badly that if he scratched his arms, his skin flaked right off. Her younger sister has mild psoriasis while both of Sally’s grown sons have extremely dry skin. Sally’s 3 year old grandson has small bumps on his skin that may be psoriasis but it has not been diagnosed as such.

Over the years, Sally has seen family doctors and dermatologists about her skin. When she was a child, the initial treatment her doctor prescribed was Alphosyl lotion. The main ingredient is tar. It was to be applied to her scalp on Sundays and left on for the entire afternoon. Needless to say, Sally came to hate Sundays because Alphosyl smelled so awful!

Sally has also had various topical corticosteroidal creams prescribed. Even though the lowest possible dosages were used, she never wanted to use them for very long because of possible harmful side effects.

At one time, Sally was sent to a “sun” clinic. Short exposures to sunlight and/or ultraviolet (UV) light are actually thought to be helpful in clearing up this particular skin condition. However, she began to become leery of this treatment method because of the distinct potential for skin cancer.

During the course of her life, Sally has sometimes been very embarrassed about her psoriasis. As she put it, her mother was “horrified” that she inherited this condition from her grandfather. Hence, she would **never** be able to get married because she would pass it on to her children. This proclamation affected Sally so much that it took her a long time to tell her boyfriend (now husband). When she finally told him, he laughed because he thought that her “secret” was something “really bad”.

As a result of some of her coworkers asking her what was wrong with her skin, Sally started wearing long pants and long-sleeved tops to work all the time to avoid the embarrassment.

None of the medical treatments Sally has tried over the years have ever cleared her skin up 100%. In fact, she has found that all-natural, organic remedies work just as well, if not better.

Sally uses natural olive oil/lavender soaps imported from France. In addition, she finds that the best cream for her skin is one that she found on the Internet. **Annie's Apitherapy So Ho Mish Rejuvenate Skin Cream** is a combination of beeswax, bee propolis and royal jelly. It can be ordered from Canada The Store.

Stress and dry, cold winter weather seem to cause the majority of Sally’s “flare-ups”. These are very common triggers with many psoriasis sufferers. In the summer, her skin is much better but she has to be careful to balance her sun exposure. A little bit is good but too much makes her skin very itchy.

At the end of our time together, I asked Sally what advice she might have for others with psoriasis. She says it is very important to keep affected skin as lubricated as possible with several daily applications of creams or lotions. As a big proponent of organics, she highly recommends using as many natural products as possible including organic soaps and her favorite cream. Another suggestion is to avoid heavy perfumes. Instead, try using lighter eau de parfum sprays, applied sparingly.