Psoriasis Awareness Month

by AMY MANLEY

How to Participate in Psoriasis Awareness Month

Participating in psoriasis awareness month is easy. All you need to participate is a heavy dose of curiosity and the desire for change. The best way to become involved is to become educated on the topic. Many people don’t understand psoriasis, which makes it difficult for those with the condition to cope. By learning more about this condition and ways you can involve yourself directly, you’ll be able to make a real difference in the lives of those with this disease.

Psoriasis isn’t contagious

Psoriasis isn’t contagious, but rumors are. Sadly, many people mistakenly think this condition is contagious when, in fact, it is not. Psoriasis is a noncontiguous, chronic, autoimmune disorder that is passed down through genes. People often get the wrong idea about psoriasis because of the way the disorder appears in those with the condition.

Psoriasis causes large patches to appear on the skin, which are scaly in appearance and very itchy. These patches sometimes get so dry that they begin to crack and bleed. It can be difficult to deal with the side-effects of this condition, but when you become educated on the topic you’re able to better understand it and pass your knowledge on to others.

What causes it?

This disease is caused by genetics and the immune system. If you have psoriasis, your immune system sends out faulty signals which speed up the growth of your skin's cells. This is what causes the cracking, bleeding, and sores on the skin present in those with the condition.

In order to develop psoriasis, you must have a combination of the genes that cause the condition, and be exposed to external triggers. The triggers that cause psoriasis include stress, injury to the skin, certain types of infections, and smoking.

Is there a cure?

There isn’t a cure for psoriasis. However, there are many treatment options available to help manage the condition. Each patient has a unique treatment plan created for them, which is dependent upon the severity of the disease, and the type of psoriasis present in the patient. Each patient also reacts differently to treatment, so while one treatment method may be effective for some it might be completely ineffective for others.

The toll it takes

Psoriasis is one of the most widely misunderstood conditions. Lack of proper education affects those suffering with the condition in two different ways: patients often suffer an emotional and physical toll due to the condition, and those who fear it is contagious often treat people with psoriasis as if they are infected. According to studies, those with this condition report higher levels of anxiety and depression compared to those with other conditions. Some patients have even stated that the condition makes it difficult for them to enjoy life as they once had.

Additionally, the emotional and physical toll this condition has on a patient makes them susceptible to other conditions, such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Get involved

If you or someone you love has psoriasis, you have already taken a step towards involvement by learning the truth about this condition. You can also become involved by participating in walks for research, or submitting photos to http://www.psoriasisawarenessmonth.org/. These photos should display different challenges, breakthroughs, frustrations and achievements the person with psoriasis has encountered. By displaying your success or that of a loved one, you're helping others become more educated on the topic, which helps create an understanding among society.

You can also share your story with us to help others with psoriasis know they're not alone: /community/submit-your-story/