6 Psoriasis Comorbidities You Should Be Aware of

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How Psoriasis Can Increase Your Risk of Developing Other Health Conditions

What you may not know is that having psoriasis can be more of a problem than you think. Patients with psoriasis can develop other health conditions because of their disease. Doesn’t sound fair, does it? In this article, we will cover the details of psoriasis comorbidities, so you can know what to look for and protect your health.

An estimated 30% or more people with psoriasis may develop psoriatic arthritis, for example. Your heart and mental well-being can be affected by having psoriasis as well.

Types of Comorbidities

A few health conditions that are common to psoriasis patients are listed below. It does not mean every patient with psoriasis will get these health problems, but the risk in getting them are higher than in a person without psoriasis.

1. Hidradenitis Suppurativa

Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a chronic condition that causes the formation of lumps under the skin. The lumps usually develop in one's armpits, groin, butt or breasts. It usually occurs in areas where the skin rubs together or chafes. Sometimes, the lumps and bumps can break open, resulting in leaking, pain and irritation in the affected area. There is no cure for this condition, so if you believe you are at risk, you should talk to your doctor.

It's also important to know that there is a connection between hidradenitis suppurativa and psoriasis. A new study shows that people with hidradenitis suppurativa (commonly females) also suffer from psoriasis. While research is ongoing, professionals believe HS and psoriasis share the same immune-pathogenic pathways.

2. Psoriatic Arthritis

This is a fairly common malady that comes with psoriasis. It causes pain, stiffness and swelling in and around the joints, causing the patient much discomfort. Treatment for psoriatic arthritis includes medications called disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs). Corticosteroids, splinting of the joints and exercise are also prescribed to help control symptoms of psoriatic arthritis.

3. Cardiovascular Disease

Research has shown that there is an increased risk for heart disease in patients with psoriasis. This is especially true with severe psoriasis cases. The odds are high for them to have a major cardiac problem arise and the risk for stroke is higher as well. Lifestyle modifications, such as a low-fat diet and exercise, are highly encouraged to keep the inflammation at bay. The use of omega-3 supplements is a good option to help with controlling inflammation. Medications may be used to reduce the chance for the patient to have any cardiac issues.

4. Diabetes

Psoriasis is an autoimmune disorder and it can lead to many problems in the body. Patients with psoriasis are at an increased risk for type 2 diabetes. In fact, patients who have psoriasis that covers 10% of their body have a 64% more of a chance of getting type 2 diabetes than those who don't. Again, lifestyle changes and medication can treat these patients so that they do not have complications from the disease.

5. Depression

It is a vicious circle when it comes to psoriasis and mental well-being. The disease can bring on emotional distress for the people it afflicts. It can cause them to lose self-esteem and studies have shown that it can increase the risk for mood disorders, like depression. One-fourth of psoriasis patients suffer from depression. Medicine and counseling can help address this disorder and alleviate its symptoms.

6. Hypertension

Hypertension is a fancy word for high blood pressure. If your blood pressure is consistently above normal, this can lead to health issues like a heart attack or stroke. While symptoms and treatment for psoriasis may bring on stress, causing one's blood pressure to rise, the main link for psoriasis and hypertension is increased levels of angiotensins in people with psoriasis. These increased levels can lead to high blood pressure by overstimulating a hormone that causes the kidneys to absorb water and salt. This can cause people to drink more, which means more fluid in the body, causing high blood pressure.

Other Conditions

There are other types of conditions that can transpire from psoriasis. Cancer, metabolic syndrome and obesity are some of the comorbidities that may arise as well as immunity-related conditions like Crohn’s disease. Skin cancer seems to be a high risk for psoriasis patients. Lymphoma is also a concern. These cancers have been associated with the psoriasis treatment which entails suppress the immune system. Regular health screenings should be done for cancer. Other lifestyle changes are needed to promote better health and stave off potential disease brought on by psoriasis.