

ERIC BAKKER ND



THE PSORIASIS PROGRAM

Understanding the Lifestyle



Table Of Contents

Psoriasis And Understanding The Lifestyle	3
The Pareto 80/20 Concept	6
Accept Full Responsibility For <i>Your</i> Health	9
The 6 Principles Of Self-Responsibility	10
Why 21 st Century Living Encourages Psoriasis	11
Are You A Fussy Person?	13
Stress And Your Digestive System – The 6 Main Factors	14
How Stress Affects Your Immune System – The Walking Wounded	15
Unhappy Lives Create Inner Stress And Eventual Illness	17
The Holmes-Rahe Stress Test	21
Recognizing Stress In Yourself	22
Digestive Aggravations In Psoriasis Patients	24
Skin Aggravations In Psoriasis Patients	24
Anxiety	25
6 Tips On Dealing With Anxiety And Tension	26
Stop Worrying About Your Health	30
Boosting Your Parasympathetic Nervous System	34
Twenty Peaceful Minute Sessions (TPM)	38
The Quiet Pond	40
Laughter Is The Best Medicine For Both Mind And Body	43
5 Reasons Why Laughter Is Good For Your Health	43
12 Opportunities For You To Laugh	45
Sleep And Insomnia	47
Ask Yourself These 7 Sleep Questions	49
14 Ways To Beat Insomnia	51
Are You Exercising Yet?	55
Those With Psoriasis Benefit From Exercise	57
The 8 Best Exercise Tips For Those With Psoriasis	58
Yoga	59
Tai Chi	60
Mold, Your Environment And Psoriasis	62
What To Do If All Else Fails	67
What To Do If You Aggravate	67
14 Potential Treatment Aggravations And What To Do	69
Troubleshooting – What To Do If You STILL Need Help	75
Why Do Only Some People Get Well And Stay Well?	76
Do You Have Any Obstacles To Cure?	77
Postscript	80
Just A Few Points Before I Conclude	81
References	81

Psoriasis - Understanding the Lifestyle

Your lifestyle - how you live, eat, think and express emotions will determine your health. To prevent disease, you may have to change how you live. *Brian Carter*



Psoriasis is an ailment that responds very well to a healthy change in diet and lifestyle. There are definitely ways to prevent outbreaks and deal with symptoms, and they are not that hard!. There are many pharmaceutical medications and creams that can be used to treat psoriasis, but they require constant use and can cost lots of money over time. The best thing you can do for yourself initially is to change your lifestyle and prevent the outbreaks. It makes a lot of sense to

try this first, instead of adopting not so healthy ways of living and then having to resort to drugs to get rid of the symptoms.

You will find that some lifestyle changes are really simple, while others are somewhat more difficult to adopt. Finding ways to prevent psoriasis outbreaks is a search any sufferer should be willing to pursue. The first thing you will want to change about your lifestyle is your diet, have you done this? I recommend that you take a look at Psoriasis Diet book, the most comprehensive one written about psoriasis yet, this book will explain everything you need to know about what to eat and what to avoid when you have psoriasis. Changing your diet can help you lose weight, which may be a factor in triggering psoriasis. Changing your diet will also help prevent chronic disease and could even help to extend your life by a decade or more. Add more fruits and vegetables to the diet and try to remove those take away foods and animal fats. Use sugars in moderation and watch out for processed foods, it is best to prepare you own food as much as possible.

A Change Is As Good As A Holiday

"There is no true healing unless there is a change in outlook, peace of mind, and inner happiness". Dr. Edward Bach

I have on several occasions witnessed that when a patient who had chronic psoriasis moved from one house to another, or changed the country they lived in that their health improved, and in some cases their skin condition even went away entirely without any further intervention. This is a true fact, and something that used to really surprise me many years ago.

But why did this happen, and why did it take a move to bring about such a change in their health? Experience has led me to believe that it was because the person left some kind of stress behind; like work stress, a relationship stress, maybe their son, daughter, ex-partner, mother in law, etc. Maybe it was a change in diet; they were deficient in a mineral or vitamin or allergic to a certain food, or perhaps a change in the air temperature or humidity.

An improvement in health can come about for many reasons, and often a change in the person's outlook by changing their residence, their occupation or their key personal relationships will bring about an improved state of health. Dr. Edward Bach (Bach Flower Remedies) was a doctor many years ahead of his time, he gave a public lecture in London in the 1920's about the emotional causes of ill health and was very much scorned by the medical establishment who thought he was a fool, after all, how could "emotions be a causative factor in illness", when any self-respecting doctor knew in the 1920's knew that there was only one cause, and it was those nasty germs!

Psoriasis and The Power of Positive Thinking

Some people I have known over the years with psoriasis suffer from anxiety and depression, and its not hard to see why you can easily become negative at different times, and it is the negative thoughts and emotions which are unfortunately what often keep people in the very uncomfortable condition they are in. I believe that it is important for the psoriasis patient to relax more, and preferably have a "controlled" relaxation session in the afternoon for 20 minutes. This may sound somewhat unscientific, but it is amazing what can happen when we dispel that negative energy and replace it with a boost of positivity. During these relaxation sessions it is important to stop thinking about any problems that require a solution, and to focus on a beautiful event or place you have been to. By stimulating the relaxing part of our brain, we boost our immunity, decrease our blood pressure and have even been shown to improve our digestion.

Never underestimate the power of positive thinking.

Negative thoughts can lead to anxiety, negative emotions and actions and even anger. If you are feeling down, all you want to do is stay under the covers and not deal with anyone. People with psoriasis can sometimes have negative thoughts about their condition that can lead them and others into really believing those thoughts to be true. If you constantly tell people you aren't smart enough, in time you will believe that to be the actual truth. However, if you tell yourself you are just as clever as everyone else, you will believe that to be the truth as well. A negative thought process and negative attitude would not give you the courage and strength to even try to rise about these negative thought patterns. A positive attitude will give you the confidence to go for it, even if you don't get it and least you have tried!

Every day and in every way I'm getting better

It is very important to always believe in your recovery from psoriasis, even though your doctor may have told you that psoriasis is an "incurable" disease. Believe me, the road to recovery is more than just drugs, creams and doctor's visits, it is about convincing yourself that everything is going to be just fine. It is saying everyday that this skin condition is not going to bring you down or stop you from reaching your full potential. You may have psoriasis, but it is a lot more of you than just your skin!

Make up some cards with positive affirmations and have them around your home and office, they are a great way to helping you commit to gaining control of your life back. Imagine yourself free of all illness, picture yourself living a

healthy life and enjoying all that life has to give. Remember that picture for when times get tough and things get hard.

Why spend money on a self-help CD, when it is easy and free to make your own daily affirmations! The trick is to make yourself recite these affirmations daily, even when you are not feeling at your best. Write out things such as "I am getting stronger and healthier" "I feel better and more positive with each passing day" or "I've never had so much energy" Now place these sayings in your purse or wallet or hang them in the mirror where you get ready each day.

Your lifestyle should be your main concern as far as psoriasis recovery is concerned, and that is why I have left some of what I consider to be some of the best information in a separate book.

Unless those with psoriasis change their lifestyle to reduce the causative factors, complete healing is seldom accomplished. I have certainly discovered this to be the case in my practice and have noticed that those patients who are the most committed to recognizing the causes of their psoriasis and make the appropriate diet and lifestyle changes long-term are the ones who get the best results.

But how long does it take you ask, how long do I have to keep eating the diet, how long do I have to change my ways until I have great looking skin, or until my joints don't hurt anymore? When can I get back to the foods I love to eat or drink like ice cream, take-away foods, wine, beer, candy, etc.? If you are starting to think like this you are probably not going to really recover and you probably don't have what it takes to fully recover either, to be perfectly honest. I don't want you to think that you need to be looking at "delayed gratification" with your new Psoriasis Diet and your new lifestyle, these are going to have to be modified and remain modified until you are 100 percent and then some more. Once these new elements become so engrained into your being they will most probably stay like this and become part of the new you. You will be able to adopt some of your former ways again, but *wait until you have fully recovered*, that way you will be able to discover the true nature of cause and effect more easily, i.e.; if you start to eat Twinkies, chocolate, or drink beer every day again and get itchy, develop many skin lesions or perhaps feel bloated, have gas, or constipation, then that is cause and effect, simple as that!

Lifestyle elements are frequently both the primary cause as well as the maintaining causes of psoriasis that stand squarely in the way of healing. When you come to recognize and understand these particular factors in your own lifestyle, then you will have finally discovered that the power is really in your own hands to fully recover, by making the necessary changes long-term.

Then why you are asking is the lifestyle section one the last booklets in the psoriasis series I've written?

I wanted you to get a really good grasp of the other concepts such as eating the right foods and avoiding the wrong ones, understanding about how stress affects your immune system, learning how to clean up your body through detoxification and learning about the best special foods, herbal medicines and teas and supplements which help to eradicate your psoriasis.

If you have read a lot of my psoriasis information already, then you will have noticed that much of this information contains many elements of lifestyle modification already.

Take your time and read this book all the way through because if you can fully grasp the message contained and implement the suggestions herein, I promise you that happiness and a much greater state of health will be awaiting you.

The Pareto 80/20 Concept

Healing yourself from psoriasis requires a combination of things we have spoken about at length throughout my psoriasis writings, but most importantly, it requires some kind of balance. The eighty/twenty balance is a concept that can help you put these factors into perspective.

An Italian economist named Pareto created a mathematical formula in 1906 to describe the distribution of unequal wealth in his country at the time. Pareto noticed that twenty percent of the population owned eighty percent of the country's wealth. This 80/20 principle can be applied to help you manage your psoriasis, and your life in general more effectively.

The 80 Percent

Spend eighty percent of your time concerning yourself about your lifestyle habits, including ways you can balance your work and home life and work to live (not the other way around), how you can include plenty of healthy activity and exercise into your daily life, what you do to relax every day and interact in a positive way with those around you. Family or friends may know you better than you know yourself and they on occasion give you feedback if you appear tense, stressed, anxious or get angry or impatient at times. It is more important for me as a practitioner to have you address these issues than it is to worry about what kind of fruit or grain is better for your digestive system.

By spending a proportionately bigger chunk of your time working on *you* rather than on *your psoriasis*, you will have understood the immense healing power that can come from within rather than from outside your body. Your body's innate ability to heal, leading to a recovery from your psoriasis may quite surprise you.

Look at ways of healthy eating we have spoken at length about in the Psoriasis Diet book, such habits include eating away from computers and TV screens, slowing down when you eat, chewing foods, etc. Do you ever leave the table feeling eighty percent full, and twenty percent empty? Or do you eat until you are almost full, and then go back for more? You should never have to go back for second helpings; it means that you are probably overfilling your stomach. By leaving the table while you are still capable of eating more, your stomach will be much more capable of processing any foods in it, and also allowing the enzymes and hydrochloric acid to deal more efficiently with restoring your digestive function.

Now is the time to drop the word "diet" from your vocabulary, it can have negative connotations and for some it means eating a certain way for a while, and then slowly sliding back into their regular eating pattern.

I use the word Psoriasis "Diet" to show you the healthy eating principles which are not only important overcome psoriasis, but to remain in great health for

many years to come. Once you customize and adopt many of these eating habits into your own life, you won't think of your newly adopted habits and food choices as a diet but rather as an eating style that makes you feel consistently great.

The 20 Percent

Spend about twenty percent of your time being more focused on your health complaints, and look at the potential issues that are building up your health, as well as issues involved right now which may be breaking down your health, maintaining your psoriasis. Are they diet related, lifestyle related, stress related, etc. Remain objective, and *focus your attention from a positive and not a negative perspective, concerning yourself about the best possible ways of tackling your psoriasis by looking at any underlying causes.* You may need to ask for some professional help, and don't be afraid to do so.

Unfortunately, some people with chronic psoriasis can pursue stressed-out lifestyles, thinking about how psoriasis is affecting them, lamenting to anybody who wants to hear how bad they feel, how terrible their skin looks and maintain a strong focus on psoriasis eradication by way of a super-strict regimented diet and dozens of supplements or skin creams, rather than lifestyle enhancement. And I can perfectly understand why, it's because they have not really found much long-term relief with many of the treatments they have tried, and have most probably not been taken too seriously by their doctor.

Others may become entirely absorbed in taking lots of dietary supplements or drugs with the aim of conquering psoriasis almost like some sort of inner battle has to be waged. There may not as much concern with leading a balanced and relaxed lifestyle than taking products or special foods, and some may not be too concerned when it comes to healthy eating, including a token piece of lettuce and tomato next to their French fries and glass of wine, thinking that a tube of cream and bunch of pills might get things right. Unfortunately, this too is not a wellness-centered approach, it is very hit and miss and will give temporary results at best. This scenario is much more common than you think; I see it all the time in the clinic.



Here is a picture taken of the dietary supplements a person with chronic psoriasis has been taking. There are more than 60 different kinds of dietary supplements, creams and ointments, as well as herbal and homeopathic medicines taken for years on a rotational basis. This is a rather extreme (but not uncommon) example of being disease-focused and not wellness-centered, and it is not unusual for a person who has had psoriasis for several years to have a cupboard full of such products. And yet they still have their psoriasis, albeit with a lighter wallet.

A balanced approach to diet and lifestyle and supplementation is critical, it can get boring when you eat a "perfect diet" one hundred percent of the time, and some of your friends and family may begin to see you as a pain in the butt.

I gave up preaching on health matters to my family and friends years ago, and the only people who get my health sermons today are the ones who pay for my services, or when I give presentations to the public, at naturopathic or chiropractic colleges or at integrative medicine conferences.

Here Is A Brief Summary Of How 80/20 Rules Can Apply To You

- Devote 80 percent of your efforts towards your lifestyle and dietary habits when it comes to recovering from psoriasis. Do you have enough work/play balance? Are you worrying about things too much? Is your sleep disturbed? Do you have relationship problem with a friend, family member, your boss or maybe somebody you employ? These underlying personal conflicts can really play havoc with your stress and are sometimes one of the biggest triggers for psoriasis.
- Devote 20 percent of your efforts concerning yourself with the actual diet itself and treatment of inhibiting and eradicating psoriasis by way of specialized foods and skin treatments, dietary supplements, essential oils and herbal medicines. Follow the Psoriasis Diet principles and take your dietary supplements.
- Devote 80 percent of your diet to the vegetables that grow above the ground primarily, the leafy greens and colored vegetables.
- Devote 20 percent of your diet to a combination of animal proteins like white meats, eggs, and lamb, the grains (quinoa, amaranth, millet, brown rice) nuts, and seeds as well as starchy vegetables (in time).
- Devote 80 percent of your diet towards alkaline foods, and 20 percent towards acid based foods. You can read all about this in the Psoriasis Diet.
- Leave the table when you are 80 percent full, leave 20 percent of your stomach empty in order for efficient digestion to occur.

Staying In Control

Never let circumstances control you. You change your circumstances. *Jackie Chan*

When it comes to lifestyle, your recovery is contingent not only on the foods you feed your stomach, but also on the thoughts you feed your mind and even the very beliefs you base your life on.

The important thing about the Psoriasis Diet outlined in this book, and the Psoriasis Program outlined in series of booklets on psoriasis is that the protocol gives you complete control over your recovery process from psoriasis because it has a strong focus on *your attitudes and belief systems* and the fact the you will need to accept full responsibility for your psoriasis. You can modify this program, customize and design it and continually adjust it as you improve to suit your personal preferences & lifestyle situation, because *YOU are in control*.

When it comes to treatment, it is best if you can work in with your health-care professional, but for many patients this may not be a reality due to many factors such as cost, travel or other specific issues.

No doubt, many of you who read this book will become your own physician, nevertheless don't be afraid to ask for help but do remain in control of your recovery at all times, and accept responsibility, you are an adult after all!

Accept Full Responsibility For *Your* Health

There are two types of pain you will go through in life, the pain of discipline and the pain of regret. Discipline weighs ounces while regret weighs tons. *Jim Rohn*



As part of your healing process, it is important to see for yourself how you are contributing to your own psoriasis problems and how you can take charge of your own life to create the kind of health you really want. Unfortunately, some people I have seen with psoriasis don't appear to have a strong sense of personal accountability for their own health.

But this evidence is quite obvious when it comes to health in general and not just psoriasis, because there are many high-risk behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol daily, eating take away too frequently, surviving on nutritionally depleted, refined or highly processed foods and living a sedentary lifestyle (no exercise) which are all potentially predisposing factors in a number of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

I'm always optimistic nevertheless that I can encourage psoriasis patients to overcome many of these high-risk behaviors and move into wellness behavioral patterns if they choose to do so.

I'm going to let you in on a little but vital secret, *are you paying attention?*

Learn to act upon the conviction that *your* health is primarily within *your* own hands, not the doctor's, your mother-in-law's, your partners; it's in *your* hands. That's what self-responsibility is all about, and so is a full and complete recovery from psoriasis. Are you ready to accept *complete responsibility* for your health?

But why you ask is everybody around me telling me that somebody they knew just got diagnosed with cancer or heart disease? Isn't that just a consequence of getting older? Not really, there are just too many people today developing seriously chronic and avoidable diseases prematurely, self-responsibility clearly hasn't caught on in any big way and it is because many people just keep on living without any thought of the future when it comes to their health. One of the biggest factors accounting for insufficient self-responsibility in our society today is a clear lack of effective health education.

You may not have been taught a lot of the dietary and lifestyle concepts you will read about in the Psoriasis Program, and I encourage you to investigate your current diet and lifestyle and ask yourself why you are not getting the permanent results you desire. Maybe it's time for a change, and while I can't persuade you unless you are committed and ready to make those necessary changes, you will almost certainly discover that the amazing benefits of asserting your sovereignty and autonomy will be more than sufficient to reward your efforts. You can have amazing health if you want to!

The 6 Principles Of Self-Responsibility

I find your lack of faith quite disturbing. *Darth Vader*

Why should you take on the responsibility of your own health? It is too easy to get caught up in the trap of non-responsibility like some folks with psoriasis have. Some patients I have seen believe that they are controlled by their circumstances or by their partner's choices, and not by their own choices. When you create these loopholes and booby-traps for yourself it is too easy to create destructive health patterns like avoiding exercise, eating convenience foods on the hop, drinking too much alcohol, all the while knowing that "things could be a whole lot better", but you have made the decision to defer your healthy habits until the kids move out, until you have a better job, until your finances improve, until you have left your partner who takes you for granted, or any one of a million other reasons such as "I'll wait until the 1st of January next year, that's when I'll go on a detox". I've heard them all when it comes to chronic health complaints like psoriasis. Today is the first day of the rest of your life.

Here are 6 principles that can help you shape some more self-responsibility if you only let them.

- 1. Be motivated by a desire to be happy.** You can pursue a high level of health for the sake of wanting to feel great about your life. Focus on the positive in your life and never the negative, and always know that people are as happy as they make up their minds to be. I like people to always imagine that their future will be the best time of their life. When your mind is encouraged to think positive on a daily basis, "miracles" just seem to happen. You may like to read "The Secret", a self-help book written in 2006 by Rhonda Byrne.
- 2. Take control of your life.** Some of my favorite quotes are from Jim Rohn, and this is one of my personal favorites: "If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for little old YOU? *Not much.*" While your family, friends, boss and co-workers may have an influence in your life, you will ultimately make your own choices and need to accept full responsibility for what good or poor health patterns occur in your own life. When you finally decide to come to terms with this level of reality, only then will you be free from the need to find lame excuses, scapegoats, or victim mentalities. At that point you will most certainly discover that the relationship between diet, lifestyle and psoriasis are inextricably linked.
- 3. There is only one you.** This is very important to understand. Even though similar factors apply when it comes to people developing psoriasis, your individual path to recovery and wellness in your situation will be different from anybody else. Try to picture yourself as being extraordinary in every way, your immune system, brain, body-build, likes and dislikes, occupation, lifestyle and diet, in fact everything is different from anybody else. This is why you will need to shape and form the Psoriasis Program to suit your own unique and individual needs. As in disease development processes, similar principles apply to most people

like diet, lifestyle, stress management, exercise, etc., but you will have to tweak things to suit your own unique needs.

- 4. Do you have a sense of purpose?** Do you have an aim in your life? If you do, having an aim and clear set of goals in your life can give you the rewards of feeling centered and content as your life progresses. For example, one of my goals was to complete the Psoriasis Program and to get it into your hands, and I have achieved a great sense of satisfaction by having achieved this. What is one of your goals? I'm sure that a permanent solution to your psoriasis is on your mind, that's why you bought this Program. Dr. Hans Selye (*Stress Without Distress*) discovered and documented in the 1930's that stress made people sick, always believed that a goal or definite purpose in a person's life was one of the most important and fundamental principles to positive health and wellbeing. Write down your goals and think about your purpose, your immune system will certainly benefit and so will your recovery from psoriasis.
- 5. Don't make decisions when stressed.** Postpone making any decisions until you feel better. Some patients make big or important decisions during an aggravation of their psoriasis treatment or when they are undergoing a detox for example. These are the wrong times because you can be emotionally charged and your feelings and thoughts may be clouded with negativity or a sense of pessimism.
- 6. Start Today!** Don't postpone the inevitable, start right NOW by making simple healthy changes and don't tell anybody about it either. How many people have you heard tell you: "I've just started a diet, I'm going to the gym now and eating healthy". Next week they have a wine glass in their hand and don't mention anything about the exercise. Just do it don't talk about it, *actions speak louder than words*. One of my favorite quotations is this: "A good plan violently executed today is better than a perfect plan executed next week." You will have a lot more self-respect and people will respect you more too when you act rather than talk. It's the little things you do everyday that count. Start today by moving your body more, and doing something that brings you joy and pleasure every single day. The biggest journey starts with the smallest step, so let's *step out today*.

Why 21st Century Living Encourages Psoriasis



It is not hard to see why living today encourages psoriasis. Many of us tend to live stressed and hurried lives, we eat the wrong kinds of foods and too many of them, we eat too quick, we even eat in front of TV or computer. An interesting survey recently mentioned that 1 in 8 people today globally are on Facebook and 1 in 5 people in America eat one meal of the day, either breakfast, lunch or dinner, while checking their Facebook page. This is like sending a text message while you are driving, you can your brain be engaged with eating and digesting a meal when the mind is concentrating on something else! Soda drinks and alcohol as well as copious amounts of coffee and tea are drunk every day by millions.

Many people still live in damp or poor ventilated housing or what we known in New Zealand to be “leaky buildings”. Others routinely take an antibiotic or the oral contraceptive pill, antacids, statins or anti-inflammatory drugs.

There are so many reasons why we live in an age today that is just as conducive for the development and maintenance of psoriasis as it was in the 1980’s, and I suspect in the year 2050 that folks will be just as susceptible to psoriasis. According to current studies, as many as 7.5 million Americans—approximately 2.2 percent of the population, have psoriasis.

(https://www.psoriasis.org/learn_statistics)

But there are many ways we can avoid getting into this mess in the first place, and the first and foremost thing that we can do is to look carefully at what we are eating and drinking everyday, and how we are actually living, it’s as simple as that.

After having read the Psoriasis Diet, you will have gained a good understanding of avoiding certain foods and including others in your diet, you will have read and learned all about the importance of raw foods, a pH balanced diet as well as the reasons why you should be including those important fermented and cultured foods in your diet. There are more than 200 pages packed into the Psoriasis Diet book, more than in any other book I’ve seen on this topic. You will find another book I’ve written contains valuable information about psoriasis-inhibiting “special” foods in Psoriasis - Special Foods, Supplements and Herbs.

By implementing these dietary strategies I’ve outlined you are doing everything you can in a diet sense, but believe me, this is not enough!

It is especially important that you grasp the meaning of this booklet, Psoriasis and Understanding The Healthy Lifestyle. Health-care professionals are generally great at telling their psoriasis patients what to eat and what to avoid as well as the correct supplements or products to take that will help to reduce their psoriasis, but this is not enough to eradicate it and prevent it from coming back.

Remember what I mentioned the 80/20 rule? Recovery will mean that you need to be focused and eighty percent of your efforts need to go into positive diet and lifestyle changes, there is little point in eating a nutritious and healthy balanced diet if you eat it in front of your widescreen every night, or you have lunch while checking how many friends “like” your comment of recent photos on Facebook.

I’ve learned years ago to keep away from screens when it comes to eating. I also learned to slow down and relax more and to accept that jobs I accomplish are OK at 75% and don’t need to be 100% perfect. I’d like to explain about how stress can negatively impact on your immune system and the importance of relaxation when it comes to psoriasis recovery, this piece of information may be your tipping point when it comes to not only recovering from psoriasis, but from many other health complaints that may have plagued you all your life.

Are You A Fussy Person?



This is not meant to be derogatory at all, but some psoriasis patients I've seen over the years are just too plain fussy or way too anal about even the smallest of details.

Some people with psoriasis fuss too much about their diet, or place too much emphasis on eating this or that kind of grain or certified spray-free produce - until they eat out at a café, a wedding or somebody else's place. Others with psoriasis may be hyper critical about mobile phone use, adorning their bodies with strange gadgets designed to clear negative vibrations from their living environment, until they step

outside and are bombarded by microwaves from all directions.

Some folks are always looking for the holy grail of psoriasis "cure" products, and discover that every six months the latest and greatest product has just been released online and they just have to have it because it will "solve all their skin problems", but then come to realize that it made absolutely no difference in the long run. Many patients with psoriasis eventually end up with a cupboard full of expired stuff and a thin wallet as a consequence.

Others shun all commercial soaps, cleansers and personal care products and are totally absorbed by reading every label to exclude every possible chemical from their life, until they step outside and breathe in the air or communicate wirelessly. I have a friend who is a staunch anti-fluoride campaigner but drinks beer, uses a mobile phone and has a poor diet, but nevertheless passionately believes that fluoride is carcinogenic substance that should be banned from the face of the Earth.

Can you see how lop-sided many of us have become? Having chronic psoriasis can make us rather anxious about our health and all things that can affect it, and these fixated and engrained believe systems can eventually become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Isn't it time to focus on the real issues and the bigger picture here, your lifestyle and diet and the causes of your psoriasis, and not to become too fussy or entirely focused about just one aspect of this until it consumes you?

There is no point spending a big part of your day fussing about trivial details, worrying or even developing anxiety about one aspect of your diet or lifestyle that you feel is important and may hinder your recovery, it will only hold you back.

Let's take look at stress and your digestive system, because it is important to remember that your digestive system needs to be in optimal health if your are to beat psoriasis.

Stress And Your Digestive System – The 6 Main Factors

The six main factors today affecting stress and your digestive system:

- 1. Time Urgency** – convenience and fast foods rule today, they have become acceptable to many simply because we “do not have the time anymore”. And when we do eat, we eat hurried and just eat to get it over and done with. We don’t chew foods properly and many times don’t even look at our foods, up to one third of us look at a screen as we are eating.
- 2. Eating Under Stress Or Tension** – Many families eat under stress or when tense, and many eat whilst at their desk or at work. Today, many families are single parent and there are not enough good family times when everybody sits around the table enjoying a meal and each other’s company.
- 3. Not Eating Breakfast** – You would be surprised how many women in particular skip breakfast. My guess is, as many as one in two or three working women with kids just don’t make enough time to have a decent breakfast.

By the time morning tea comes around at 10.00AM they are hungry, and by 6.00pm they are starving and eat too much, affecting their digestive systems at night. People who skip breakfast are more prone to a higher carbohydrate intake later in the day for an energy boost, especially coffee and chocolate. These are the kinds of hurried and worried lifestyles that not only lead the person towards a weight-problem, they often end up with chronic digestive problems as well. People who live like this will also find themselves having more mood issues, sleeping disturbances and energy problems throughout their day. Is it any wonder they can’t get on top of their psoriasis?

- 4. Eating Too Late** – placing stress on our ability for our digestive system to adequately break down and absorb our meals. We eat at a time when our body is preparing to rest for the evening.
- 5. Too Many Stimulants** – Many people with psoriasis rely on tea, coffee and caffeinated drinks today whilst others rely on alcoholic beverages. These stimulants and depressants can wreak havoc with our nervous and digestive systems. We end up getting caught in a no-win situation of fatigue and energy.
- 6. Multi-Tasking** – A bit similar to time urgency, this term was unheard of when I grew up in the sixties, today it is seen as the norm if you can complete several jobs at once. With the global economies in financial crisis at present, companies are downsizing and placing more strain and workload on their existing employees. The result is that fewer remaining employees are expected to increase their work output and yet get the same pay rate. The end result is that people have considerably less time for food or relaxation breaks, and many work over their lunchtime, arriving home later and even more stressed. Teachers are a prime example here; just ask one about their never-ending workload.

What You Can Do

- It is important in stress not just to treat the physical manifestations of stress, but to also to allow help through proper stress management or counseling. Good lifestyle recommendations for those with stress or burnout include regular relaxation exercises, yoga, tai chi, meditation, massage swimming and walking. I will expand a lot more on the important areas of why relaxation later on.
- Nutritionally it is best to follow the Psoriasis Diet, one of the first books in my psoriasis series.
- Slow down when you eat, belly-breathe and if possible eat in a relaxed environment. It can make the world of difference.
- Although there are many specific and effective herbs, minerals and supplements such as amino acids available for stress, whenever I treat a patient presenting with stress, fatigue, burn-out, and poor immunity associated with stress, I recommend adrenal fatigue treatment, look at another booklet called Psoriasis Stress and Immunity, in this book you will read all about adrenal fatigue, immunity and the connection with psoriasis. In most instances, pharmaceutical medicines are not required.
- Complete the Holmes-Rahe Stress Test further ahead in this section; this test will give you an insight into how much stress is actually affecting your body.
- Follow the 80/20 concepts I have outlined previously.

Many people with digestive problems who have psoriasis have one or several underlying stress related problems. In order to truly heal, it is necessary to tackle not just the surface manifestations of the stress, i.e. the physical symptoms by taking an "acid blocker" drug or a sleeping pill from your doctor, but to understand and treat the actual causes of the stresses, whether they be of psychological, emotional, nutritional or toxic origin underpinning your physical complaints.

How Stress Affects Your Immune System – The Walking Wounded



Did you read the booklet entitled "Psoriasis, Stress and Immunity"? It will give you a good overview of how your immune system copes under stress, and how stress affects your immune system and causes psoriasis to go out of control. Stress has been proved to be one of the most important of the influencing factors in the development of psoriasis.

Research has shown that between 37 to 78 percent of patients admit that stress affects the condition of their skin. In addition to stress from other factors, psoriasis itself is a stressor due to the abnormal skin conditions; patients experience low self-esteem and feel depressed. This further adds to their internal stress levels.

I've found that the kind of chronic psoriasis patients who come to us for help appear to be continually in a state of sickness or unwellness, often with a poor immune system, are those folks who have a tendency to suffer from long-term and low-grade continual stress. I call them the walking wounded, they are not necessarily "sick", but they never seem to have abundant energy, they hardly ever seem to smile or fully embrace life.

They don't appear to enjoy life much and see it as some sort of drudgery they have to go through, and many such folk are not really happy with the quality of their lives or rather what has become of it. The thing with stress and poor immunity underlying psoriasis is that it can affect so many systems of the body and create dysfunction across the board that it truly is a systemic problem for many, is it any wonder a person with psoriasis can potentially feel terrible, and so do the people around him or her? I've known many sick psoriasis patients who can even be considered "social lepers", they go nowhere, can't eat out, have minimal friends and can feel like an outcast. They become stressed, and it is this chronic state of stress that will ensure they don't recover anytime soon.

Among adults, job and financial worries are often among the leading contributors to stress, but increased crime, violence, peer pressure leading to substance abuse (alcohol and drugs like ecstasy, cannabis and methamphetamine), social isolation, loneliness, and family problems can also create stress-related problems. Stress is not only creating problems with adults, but is increasingly causing health problems among children, teenagers and especially the elderly.

When I grew up in the 60's, stress didn't seem to be the buzzword that it is today. Sure people did drugs, but nothing like the drugs of today; alcohol was a problem - now alcohol related problems like domestic violence and automobile accidents are quite chronic and regular daily events. Sure there was violence, but nothing like today, now we accept violence on television and the movies, and computer games and even children's cartoons often contain an element of violence. Bad language is now virtually the norm on TV, and sexual references are what often sell music these days.

Remember the 1950's when children could safely walk to school and high-school massacres were unheard of? In the 21st century, it seems that we have become an increasingly violent, hurried, stressed, time poor, worried, politically correct and sick society. Baby boomers today are more prone to stress related illness like diabetes, heart disease and cancer than their forebears, the silent generation, were. It is your immune system that is particularly affected by chronic low-grade stress, and it is the walking wounded as patients we see in the clinic on a daily basis.

We see patients with all manner of disease due to a compromised immune system like recurrent cough and colds, skin infections, recurrent allergies, autoimmune diseases and many different types of cancers.

As I mentioned earlier that we see a certain group of patients who always "always sick" or who are chronically fatigued from the hurry and worry of modern life. Their conventional doctor may label them as being depressed or

anxious and prescribe a drug, after all, the test results appear to be fine, it must be in the patient's head.

When no test results can account for the way a patient with a compromised immune system feels, these are the folks in particular who need to make the necessary lifestyle changes as well as look at their adrenal health before they take any form of prescribed (drug-based) medications.

A compromised immune system can mean that you could become a sitting duck for leaky gut syndrome, generally found with a digestive bacterial overgrowth or a yeast infection, because your resistance will be lowered and your susceptibility will be increased. All you need now is a prescription for an antibiotic drug to tip the balance and precipitate dysbiosis or SIBO (small intestinal bowel overgrowth), especially if you drink alcohol or have a sugar rich to cope with your stressful life. It is the convergence of several factors which most always account for an increased susceptibility towards psoriasis, but it generally stems from an immune system which was compromised in the first place which will not only ensure the beginning but the continuation of psoriasis, and sometimes indefinitely.

Most people today associate stress with worry, but stress has a much broader definition to your body. I have always noted that psoriasis patients don't generally see themselves as living under much stress, or even feeling stressed. Dr. Wilson, the adrenal fatigue expert, once said to me "anybody with a pulse and breathing will suffer with stress in their lives". I recall telling him that I didn't feel particularly stressed and his reply was this: "But Eric, you have just told me that you have a wife and four teenagers, you certainly will have lots of stress in your life!"

Any kind of change, whether it is emotional, environmental, illness, hormonal or just pushing yourself too hard, can be stressful to your body. Even positive events, such as getting a promotion at work, winning a large sum of money or even taking a vacation can be stressful and can gradually weaken your health before you realize what is happening. If you have recently experienced a change in your sleep patterns, feel fatigued, anxious or a lack of enjoyment for life, or have multiple aches and pains, it is highly likely that you are overstressed.

Unhappy Lives Create Inner Stress And Eventual Illness



Research by Dr. Hans Selye, the first scientist who discovered that stress actually made people sick found something quite amazing – that animals, which were simply restrained, died quicker from stress than animals that were physically injured.

How does this relate to humans? Women for example who are living in a situation of constraint, such as a new born baby or perhaps in an unhappy relationship tend to feel constrained, that there is no light at the end of the tunnel. The same goes for the teacher trying to

teach a class of unruly students, or the air traffic controller with too many decisions to make under high pressure.

When my elderly mother was placed in a nursing home at 78 years after a stroke it proved to be more than a handful for my family and created a huge amount of stress and tension in our family. After a life of independence she was not able to relinquish control and felt very stressed until her passing, almost like an animal in Dr. Selye's experiments that was restrained to a chair. I have no doubt that the stress of her "imprisonment" as she called it only hastened her demise, because her high blood pressure, which she never previously had and brought on by stress, ensured that a second and fatal stroke occurred during a period of time when she felt the most reliant on the nursing home staff.

Research has found that psychological stress in human beings can take a hefty toll on the immune system by reducing the concentration of cytokines, highly specialized proteins that help to ward off infections. Cytokines are proteins that are produced by certain white blood cells of the immune system in order to regulate the body's response to disease and infection.

It was recently discovered that people under chronic low-grade stress had above normal levels of interleukin-6 (IL-6) that promotes inflammation and has been linked with psoriasis, but also heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, severe infections and certain cancers¹. It appears that stress increases levels of IL-6 that in turn accelerates a variety of age-related diseases.

Stress can weaken a person's immune response leaving them much more susceptible to inflammation, and this can most certainly aggravate psoriasis, and it is important for you to know that stress can lead to unhealthy lifestyle habits which only serves to increase the severity and duration of your psoriasis.

For example, stress often leads a person to overeat, lose sleep, and neglect exercise, drink alcohol and coffee and become dependent of drugs all of which can create health problems on their own right.

Stress Increases Your Chances Of An Infection – Any Infection



In one study, skin wounds on the arms of women who had higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol had lower levels of key compounds released by the body to mediate healing. Stress may make it easier for germs to infect skin wounds as researchers have proved. Investigators created skin wounds in mice that were exposed to stressful living conditions. The researchers then applied *Streptococcus* bacteria to the wounds, and compared the healing rates of the stressed mice with those of mice with skin wounds that were also exposed to the bacteria but did not undergo the same levels of stress.

Mice that had been stressed out prior to wounding and infection showed a 30% delay in wound healing at 3 and 5 days compared with the mice that were not stressed, the report indicates. In addition, the investigators found that after 5 days, the stressed mice had over 100,000 times more opportunistic bacteria in their wounds than the non-stressed mice. Seven days after the bacteria

exposure, about 85% of the wounds in the stressed mice were infected, versus about 27% of the wounds in the non-stressed mice. In this study, stress increased the rate of wound infection by threefold. Stress disrupts the body's equilibrium, in turn significantly impairing its ability to control and eradicate bacterial infection during wound healing.

Can you see the relevance here with the above mentioned mouse study and psoriasis, stress and infection? Chronic stress, which has been called our number one health problem, is not something to take lightly, it can have profound effects on your immune system and your overall health, and if you want to recover from psoriasis you will need to understand this concept, learn from it and take it seriously.

Stress-Related Health Problem – The # 1 Reason People See Doctors

Estimates have placed stress-related problems as the cause of 75 percent to 90 percent of all primary care physician visits. Psycho-neuro-immunology is a whole new field that studies the effects of psychological stress on the immune system. Scientists in this area have demonstrated alterations in the normal function of immune cells in animals during times of stress. For example, excessive physical stress changes your immune cell profile. Increased upper respiratory tract infections occur in athletes who over-train, and a decreased cell-mediated immunity has been demonstrated in such athletes. Without a properly functioning immune system, your body is vulnerable to invasion by opportunistic germs such as candida albicans, viruses, bacteria and various parasites.

It is not practical to advise you to avoid stress because, let's face it; we all have stress in our lives from one degree to another. What is practical, however, is to emphasize to you the importance of recognizing stress in yourself and others and more importantly in dealing with stress before it takes a toll on your health. There now exists ample scientific evidence to suggest that stress impairs the immune system, which allows underlying infections to cause damage.

Stress and Psoriasis Link is a Scientific Fact

There will be those who read this book and feel that there is little proof of a link between stress and psoriasis, but I can tell you from the research I have done when I wrote the Psoriasis Program, that this is certainly not the case. Just as in many dermatologic conditions, psoriasis appears to worsen with stress in a significant segment of patients, there are an incredible amount of studies which report that the proportion of psoriasis patients who respond quite strongly to stress and who notice skin aggravations in relation to stressful event ranges from 37% to an incredible 78%².

Relaxation And Meditation Calm The Mind And Fight Stress



Relaxation techniques can also be useful when stress becomes overwhelming. Yoga is a discipline I call "meditation in motion", it can lead to mental clarity, greater self-understanding, and a feeling of well being, along with improved physical fitness. Many people experience benefits not only because of the physical stretching and muscle strengthening but also because of the meditative state that is encouraged. Have you ever considered that regular

Yoga or Tai Chi may have a positive effect on your skin? They are both wonderful and will add a whole new dimension to your life.

Meditation is another technique that will allow you to calm your mind and fight stress. Meditating can help you to focus your thoughts on relaxing images or principles. Meditation has been shown in a 1998 study³ to have a most positive effect on reducing the skin aggravations as well as the duration of skin lesions in those with psoriasis. It can also help you to examine your daily life and determine what activities are contributing to your stress.

The bottom line is that stress shuts down either the recruitment or the function of those immune cells needed to fight skin inflammation and infection. Awareness of adrenal fatigue along with the correct treatment can significantly help by supporting the hormonal control of the body under-pinning stress. This highly effective protocol along with the correct dietary and lifestyle changes as outlined in Dr. Wilson's ground breaking book entitled "Adrenal Fatigue: The 21st Century Stress Syndrome" can offer you the greatest chance of overcoming stress before it takes control and ruins your health.

Cortisol is the body's main anti-inflammatory hormone, and research⁴ has shown that optimal cortisol levels can have a dramatic effect on reducing the severity and duration of psoriasis. Doesn't it therefore make sense to make sure your adrenal function is optimal when it comes to beating chronic psoriasis? Is it any wonder that most Western countries are now experiencing soaring rates of cancer, the ultimate immune disease? It is important for you to recognize that stress can be a good thing; we call this eustress as opposed to distress that leads ultimately to disease and death. For example if you are going for a job interview, a driving test, or are going to give a speech at a wedding, this type of positive short term acute stress will actually boost your adrenaline level and gives your body a natural push to get things done, your mind has a bit more clarity and you feel more alert. The key is to be aware of your stress level and get things under control if stress starts to take over.

The Holmes-Rahe Stress Test

In 1967, two American doctors formed a do-it-yourself stress test after studying the effects of stressful events and illness on several thousand patients in a hospital setting. They examined the stress of a person by measuring what they called Life Changing Units (LCU), and these included events occurring in a

person's life ranging from going on a vacation (a LCU rating of 13) through to the death of a spouse (a LCU rating of 100). I have included this stress test here so you can complete it right now, and by adding up your score you will be able to predict the likelihood of a stress related illness in your own life.

Have you noticed something when you look at the events, especially the top five most stressful events? They all have to do with a person who is close to you. As I stated earlier, it is the *emotional stresses* that have the most lasting and profound effect on our health and wellbeing.

1. Death of Spouse
2. Divorce
3. Marital Separation
4. Jail Term
5. Death of a Close Family Member

Try to complete the test below, your total score will show you how your risk will be of a stress-related illness or accident within a two-year period.

- Total LCU less than 150 - 35% increased risk
- Total LCU between 150 – 300 - 51% increased risk
- Total LCU greater than 300 - 80% increased risk

What events have happened to you in the past 12 months, and what is your score? The higher the score the more likely you are heading for stress related health problems.

The Holmes-Rahe Stress Test

Life Event	Life Value	Your Score
Death of Spouse	100	—
Divorce	73	—
Marital Separation	65	—
Jail term	63	—
Death of close family member	63	—
Personal injury/illness (like chronic psoriasis)	53	—
Marriage	50	—
Fired from work	47	—
Marital reconciliation	45	—
Retirement	45	—
Change in family member's health	44	—
Pregnancy	40	—
Sex difficulties	39	—
Addition to family	39	—
Business readjustment	39	—
Change in financial status	38	—
Death of a close friend	37	—
Change in number of marital arguments	35	—
Mortgage/Loan greater than \$10,000	31	—
Foreclosure of mortgage/loan	30	—
Change in work responsibilities	29	—
Son/daughter leaving home	29	—
Trouble with the in-laws	29	—
Outstanding achievement	28	—
Spouse begins work	26	—
Start or finish school	26	—

Change in living conditions	25	—
Revision of personal habits	24	—
Trouble with boss	23	—
Change in work hours, conditions	20	—
Change in residence	20	—
Change in school	20	—
Change in recreational habits	19	—
Change in religious activities	19	—
Change in social activities	18	—
Mortgage/Loan less than \$10,000	18	—
Change in sleeping habits	16	—
Change in number of family gatherings	15	—
Change in eating habits	15	—
Vacation	13	—
Celebrated Christmas	12	—
Minor violation of law	11	—

Your Total

Score: _____

If your score is 200 points or more and you have not been feeling well, it might be wise to have a check-up. If your score is 200 or more and you're feeling good, you are probably handling the changes rather well.

Reference: Dr. Thomas Holmes, Dr. Richard Rahe. Journal of Psychosomatic Research. 1967, vol. II p. 214.

Recognizing Stress in Yourself

No true healing can take place unless there has been a change in the patient's outlook.
Dr. Edward Bach

I believe that the real key is to recognizing stress and how it affects your body, and this differs from person to person. Here are some typical stress warning signals; can you recognize any of them?

- Feeling unable to slow-down and relax
- Explosive anger in response to minor irritation
- Anxiety or tension lasting more than a few days
- Feeling that things frequently go wrong in your life
- Can't focus your complete attention
- Regular or continual sleeping problems
- Aching neck and shoulders
- Lower back pain
- Regular indigestion or heartburn
- Heart palpitations or awareness of your heart beating
- Increased consumption of alcohol
- Overeating, especially of sweet foods
- Frequent low-grade infections

- Regular psoriasis skin flare-ups
- Severe skin flare-ups causing scratching and bleeding
- Shortness of breath
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Loss of appetite or low-grade nausea

Can you recognize more than four of the above 16 different stress warning signals? If you can confidently say "YES" to at least four of the above then you are certainly suffering from acute stress *right now*. Changing well-established habits is never easy. Because stress is accumulative, reducing any strains on your body is beneficial, and you will find it considerably easier and more effective to work on the smaller stress-related issues in your life right now than wait until they eventually develop into a full-blown health crisis like a heart attack.

Sorry, but hiding the symptoms of stress will not get rid of the strain on your body. Early treatment of stress-related health problems is most effective, especially if you want to prevent premature illness. Feelings of irritation or anger, tension in your neck or shoulders, sweaty palms or heart palpitations, tossing and turning at night and so forth are all early warning signs that your body is keeping itself unnaturally "revved up", and it is your sympathetic nervous system which is at work here.

It is clever for you to understand that if you focus your attention to stimulating your parasympathetic nervous system that you will be able to bring peace and harmony back once more, and restore the balance.

Stress is increasingly becoming recognized as a major contributor to heart disease, cancer and strokes, and these three are some of the most common causes of death and disability in my country and no doubt in your country as well. They may be traced, in part, to how we mismanage the stressors in our lives. But like I have shown above, there are many hundreds of studies that now show that stress is one of the major triggers in psoriasis and other auto-immune diseases. Let's take a look at how stress can aggravate certain psoriasis symptoms.

Recognizing Stress-Related Psoriasis Symptom Aggravations

The typical stress warning symptoms above apply, but what you may well notice is an exacerbation of some of the key problems you have been experiencing. Two of the most common aggravation areas with psoriasis and stress are the *digestive system* and the *skin*. I have found that the gut often becomes affected with stress, because as you will soon read, your sympathetic nervous system reduces the blood supply to the digestive system in favor of routing the blood to the larger skeletal muscles of the body in case you need to escape from a stressful event. The movement of stool in the large intestine is slowed down (inhibition of peristalsis), Your digestive secretions (pancreas, stomach and small intestine) are reduced likewise, because you don't need an optimally functioning digestive system when you are running away were running away from a dinosaur a long time ago. Today we are not so fortunate, we can run but we never really seem to recover from one stress to another.

Digestive System Aggravations in Psoriasis Patients



The digestive system is a key area for those with psoriasis, and under stress psoriasis sufferers may notice a significant amount more gas, cramps, bloating, constipation or diarrhea.

So, if you regularly get an exacerbation of your symptoms, ask yourself what kind of stress were you facing the day of the week before, this may well explain a few things! I'd like you to observe the cause (e.g. your mother-in law, son, daughter, partner or your boss) and the effect (e.g. your sudden indigestion, gas, constipation, nausea, etc.) Don't discount the medications, drugs or dietary supplements which you may be taking under stressful conditions, or to help you overcome stressful events that induce symptoms like insomnia, muscle cramps, headaches, etc. Sometimes these medicines can be the very cause of digestive aggravations.

Remember, the major and even minor emotional events or conflicts we have with people often can bring on aggravations. By understanding the relationship between any potential stressful events in your life and their physical outcome, you will be in a much better position to avert such potential problems by a two-fold nature.

- You will learn the art of cause and effect, and will be more able to understand that any stressful event could be potentially underpinning some of the key digestive complaints you experience when you have psoriasis. Knowledge is power.
- By applying the knowledge you are about to learn below with regard to the autonomic nervous system, that stressful events effect your sympathetic nervous system, and that by increasing the activity of your parasympathetic nervous system you will be able to reduce all psoriasis related symptoms caused by stress and bring your body back to a state of harmony.

Skin Aggravations in Psoriasis Patients

Likewise, your skin may be affected, because stress causes your blood vessels to constrict (goose bumps) and increases the activity of the sweat glands. I've seen many patients with psoriasis who started to notice their skin becoming increasingly affected due to stressful events in their lives, with key areas including the scalp, around the ears, hands, feet as well as the finger and toenails. With increasing perspiration due to stress you may well be encouraging a yeast infection, as it will give candida exactly what it wants, a warm and moist and damp atmosphere to thrive in. Fungal skin infections are more common that you may think with psoriasis, in fact, some medical psoriasis creams are specifically targeted towards skin fungal infections.

Excessive sweating in not a pleasant thing to occur in those with a bad case of psoriasis. By recognizing the stressful events in your life and any subsequent

aggravations to these key areas affecting the skin of your body, you may be able to learn about any potential cause and effect between a psoriasis outbreak and stress in your life. By increasing your parasympathetic nervous system's dominance you can calm the skin down by reducing the body's ability to perspire as well as increase the blood supply to your skin, and this is especially important if you want your body to heal your skin more rapidly. Blood is an effective carrier and will help to remove wastes from the areas that need healing, it helps to boost the oxygen and nutrient supply as well which it carries to each and every cell.

So by now you should be able to understand why stress can be a bad thing if you have psoriasis both in the sense of the unnecessary aggravations you will probably be experiencing as well as the delayed healing that takes place when a person is under the effects of stress. Once you understand the psoriasis-stress connection and master the ability to balance your autonomic nervous system, you will experience considerably less skin aggravation and speed your healing response.

Anxiety

Laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone. *Ella Wheeler Wilcox*



The clue here is adrenaline, a powerful hormone produced by your sympathetic nervous system. The question is why should the body produce excess adrenaline out of nowhere, causing us to have "unexplainable" anxiety attacks, and heart palpitations and many other symptoms? As mentioned earlier, when we are faced with a dinosaur or a tiger, or when we encounter any kind of trauma, grief, rejection of a loved one and so forth, the body floods the circulatory system with adrenaline, the most powerful hormone of strenuous action and fear or fight. This hormone helps us to deal with the 'danger', but this danger can be real or imaginary. Those with chronic psoriasis are caught up in a real Catch-22 situation, they have several chronic symptoms which may be causing them plenty of ongoing anxiety and stress, like finding it difficult socializing with friends in summer, wearing certain clothing, embarrassing skin itching or flaking, people staring at you in public, or any one of several other problems. These health concerns become a stress in their own right and in turn stimulate the sympathetic nervous system to continually produce low levels of adrenalin and cortisol. Eventually the body's many cells become resistant to the continual production of these powerful hormones and even higher levels become produced. Depletion occurs and adrenal fatigue sets in, yet another health problem to add to the pile.

In the initial stages of a chronic psoriasis, I find that many patients present with higher levels of anxiety (higher levels of adrenalin and cortisol) than those who have had psoriasis for many years, these patients tend to show the classic signs of adrenal fatigue, and now you know why. Their endocrine glands (the adrenal glands and thyroid especially) have become increasingly exhausted from years

of worry and anxiety about their unresolved skin health problems. In time the patient becomes increasingly despondent and exhausted and will wonder if she is ever going to get well, after all, she has been told that psoriasis is "incurable". I've learned that when a person's hope for a healthy future is fading, when she feels that "no one is listening" and that every day brings little joy but fear of the psoriasis symptoms she may experience and the embarrassment that comes with it, that the patient's attitude becomes more disease-focused and not wellness-centered.

Is it any wonder that chronically affected psoriasis patients stay unwell? Now that you understand a little more about stress, attitude, and recovery, ask yourself this question: "How have I been thinking about my recovery, am I positive and truly believe that one day I will beat this thing entirely and feel fantastic once again?" Or, are you just barely getting through each day, focusing on the negative rather than the positive aspects of your health and life?

By now you may understand why I have written a great deal about stress, anxiety and psoriasis in the Psoriasis Program. A person's emotional state is generally most always affected when they have had psoriasis for several years, and most all books I have studied on this topic have very little to say about stress and a person's emotional state when it comes to psoriasis. I think it is because most of the focus is on diet and removing the skin lesions with different creams or lotions. Your mind and emotions rule your endocrine (hormone) and nervous system, which in turn rule your immune system.

An intelligent person is more interested in treating the cause of their psoriasis rather than the effect, and in many instances a person's emotional state can in fact be one of the primary maintaining causes of their psoriasis, believe it or not. Sometimes I see the "light bulb moment" in a patient's eyes when they begin to understand this information in my room, it can be their tipping point.

Here are a few solutions when it comes to anxiety and tension.

6 Tips On Dealing With Anxiety And Tension

Anxiety is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you very far.
Jodi Picoult

1. Talk It Over

Why do you think many people with psoriasis come to see health-care practitioners? My guess is to talk about their physical as well as emotional skin-related problems. This is because every patient will naturally want to talk about the physical symptoms they present with (like itching or burning skin, embarrassment, bloating, gas, etc.), and will generally launch into how they feel and issues they face with family, friends and employers, etc. because of their health condition. Many confide about what is really bugging them, and by talking it out it helps to relieve the strain and tension. Communication allows a person to see their worries and concerns in a different light. You may notice yourself that by talking about your worries and problems with somebody you trust you will often begin to see a clear path. Bottling things up only creates destructive self-talk with problems going round and round in your head. Poor

communication like this can lead to all kinds of problems, and it forms the basis for most personal and business relationship failures as well. You will become a lot less tense, stressed and anxious by discussing issues affecting you, so talk it over with someone you trust.

2. Escape For A Little While

Have you ever lost yourself in a good movie or book? Escaping mentally is a great way to alleviate mental pressure and stress. If you have a really important meeting or engagement coming up, escaping for ten to twenty minutes before the event can work miracles in terms of you being more focused and centered on the mental task at hand. A brief trip like a walk in the park or along the beach is wonderfully refreshing and only takes minutes and can take your mind off that chronic itch, at least you'll be away from a website telling you how terrible you must feel! Why escape with a glass of wine or rely on pharmaceutical or recreational drugs and physically punish yourself and only aggravate your symptoms thereafter? Making yourself stand and suffer after you opened that bottle because you couldn't switch your mind off without booze? Why do you think half the world is stoned on some form of prescribed or recreational drug? People want to free their minds, and by allowing your mind to escape with a book, a musical instrument, prayer, a walk or whatever technique you have developed you will have your own pressure release valve from the stress and strain of day-to-day living.

3. Work Off Your Anger

Have you ever felt so angry that you hit an object like a cupboard door, or thrown an object on the ground whilst swearing and cursing under your breath? Well, you are not alone. If you find yourself using anger as a general pattern of behavior, it is important to remember that anger will always leave you feeling sorry and foolish in the end. Chronic psoriasis can create a lot of physical, emotional and mental problems for a person, including anger and anxiety. If you feel like screaming or lashing out at somebody, try to hold off for just a few minutes, and like most strong emotions it will soon pass. The thing to do for example is some physical exercise like gardening, a long walk or a game of tennis. Working the anger out of the system this way, along with talking it over will leave you much less tense and more prepared to handle your conflicts and problems more intelligently. Stress has a way of working in on the psyche making some people literally snap, this is how many acts of violence such as murder are committed. If you regularly defuse your anger, you will find that you can act calmly and rationally even under the toughest conditions and tension can't build under these conditions.

4. Are You A Perfectionist?

Is your way the highway? Then give in occasionally. Have you noticed that sometimes it is just easier to agree with somebody, even though you know they are wrong and you are right? When you do, it will make you realize that winning doesn't really matter, but keeping the relationship does. Do stand your ground on what you believe is right, but do so calmly and make allowances for the fact that you *could* be completely wrong. The result will be a huge relief from tension along with the satisfaction of achievement and maturity. Are you going to still

act like a child and always have to be right? You will lose a lot of friends if you never give in. Who cares in the end if you really were right or wrong, one of my favorite sayings: "People may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel". If you truly care about your own stress levels, be aware that when you engage in conversation with somebody else that their stress levels will very much influence yours. If you stay calm and the conversation remains calm, you both leave calm and stress free with a lot less tension. Does everything you do have to be 100% perfect or you can't relax? Some people like me are just born perfectionists, and they can be hard on themselves or others if perfection is not regularly attained. These patients are the ones I see who often go onto develop thyroid and adrenal fatigue issues, because of the extreme demands they place on their physical bodies because their minds just can't seem to switch off.

5. Do One Thing At A Time

When I grew up as a baby boomer in the 60's I never heard of a word called "multi-tasking", we certainly had no mobile phones or computers. We seem obsessed these days with being able to do two or more things at once, and keep lists of all the tasks we want to complete. Many people are so busy with their own lives but manage to keep on saying "yes, I can do that" and later think "Why did I say yes, when I've got so much to do?" so before you promise to do something for somebody else, first think the important tasks you have set for yourself for today and if you won't be putting yourself under a lot of stress by taking on that extra work.

To people under tension, an ordinary workload looks so huge that it's almost painful to tackle it. Whenever you feel overwhelmed, try to tackle the most important task first then you will find that rest flows easily. Say for example you have ten things to do, just write them all down and mark them in priority with 1 being critically important, 2 moderately and 3 can wait a few days to a week. You have just clarified your priorities and set your mind at ease. And doesn't it feel good when you can cross that list off?

Do one thing at a time and do it well, then move on. By learning when to say no and completing tasks you set yourself you have more time to relax, more "you" time without that feeling that you have to be continually doing something. Are you obsessed with checking emails continually? Learn to slow down and be less accessible by way of phone or email, it is important to remember that you need time to work and time to relax. Try not to blur the whole thing; it can get a bit messy that way and you and your family will suffer. Work hard and then "power relax" even harder, that's my motto these days.

6. Go Easy With Criticism

How hard and critical are you with yourself and others? I have found that tense people are often critical people. They can tend to be hard on themselves and others. Do you expect a lot from others and then get disappointed when they don't deliver the goods? It could be your partner, or a child who you are trying to squeeze into your preconceived plans or maybe even try to control or take over to suit your own needs or belief systems. Some tense people I have observed can even be considered to be control freaks at times. Instead of being critical of others, search out and point out their good points and help them develop their weaknesses without exposing them. Nobody likes to be criticized, do you?

I often ask a psoriasis patient if they have a family member or friend who they are at conflict with regularly, or who they don't often agree with. Do they dread going to a social family event like a wedding or a family Christmas party because your sister-in-law, aunt Mary or mother-in-law will be there? If you deal with somebody regularly who you do not get on with like perhaps the "out-laws", become aware how your body may tense up, or how the muscles in your face or neck may subtly tighten up, or do your shoulders feel somewhat tight after you have been around this particular person? Did you know that tension headaches account for 80 percent of all headaches, and that low-grade emotional conflict is a prime cause of many tension headaches?

Emotional stress and tension is often felt subconsciously with thoughts and feelings about events or people creating mind-body patterns such as jaw clenching or teeth grinding later that night in bed, perhaps insomnia and muscular tension throughout the body the next day. In addition, emotional stress also causes adrenalin to be released causing muscles to fire up and be tense resulting in pain, more anxiety, your heartbeat quickens and blood sugar levels may increase which can make you feel hyper and agitated for "no know reason".

By being nice to others, they in turn will be more pleasant towards you and will feel more relaxed because less conflict will occur, and the result means less physical tension. Adrenalin then will not be released and you don't get the physical responses either. There is plenty of research showing that tense and anxious people are more prone to all forms of chronic illnesses, because the hormonal systems underpinning our system are geared towards restoring our bodies after any kind of stress. These hormonal systems affect every part of our being, so it stands to reason that when this stress defense mechanism itself breaks down that we become ill and may eventually even die as a result of continued stress and conflict.

Stop Worrying About Your Health

Common people ascribe all ills that they feel to others; people of little wisdom ascribe to themselves; people of much wisdom, to no one. *Epictetus*

Have you had your gluten-free, low caffeine, biodynamic, spray-free and non-irradiated breakfast yet? Had you eight hours of sleep, 5 + serves of vegetables, exercised for an hour and cut right back on saturated fat?

Have you noticed that there are countless websites, books, health-columns in e-zines and magazines and endless talk shows that have become the "health-police"? They dictate what you should and should not be eating and how you will stay in optimal health. A friend of mine recently gave up on a subscription to a well-known international magazine, because he was sick and tired of reading about how high his risk of cancer was from various foods and normal daily habits. He said, "If I haven't got cancer now, they'll make sure I get it by keeping all these dietary causes under my nose every month."

When I grew up, my mother used the word "hypochondriac" a lot because a friend of our family was always worried and perpetually complaining about his health to anybody who would listen. He would visit his doctor almost weekly with yet another symptom like palpitations, bad breath, gurgling sounds in his abdomen, itchy back, and so the list went on. Some patients I have seen are just like this, they constantly worry and fuss over their health continually and just don't seem to get on with their lives. Ironically, but I've noticed that some people I see with the most amazingly healthy diets appear to be the ones in the worst state of health. Those who do everything "just right" can't seem to get their health just right.

Many folks live in the belief that they must continually strive to attain perfect health, but "perfect health" is a myth and most of us are living far healthier lives than we realize. Once you develop psoriasis you certainly become more focused on your health, but failing to live by the health laws laid down by the health police can be a major source of stress, anxiety and guilt, especially for women I've found. The goal is to live for as long as you can with the best quality of life, but some women I meet are absolutely scared to death about their diet and lifestyle, they simply must exercise every day and eat a perfect diet, because there always seems to be some other woman who looks so much sexier and skinnier than she does, regardless of her age.

A lot of patients I see seem have lost sight of what it means to be healthy I think, the point is to use common sense and if you feel really good then all is well, in spite of what you eat and how much you exercise, regardless of what those e-zines, blogs or paper magazines at the salon or doctor's surgery may tell you. Recovery from psoriasis is pretty straightforward and you should notice regular improvements, and be sure to cut yourself plenty of slack along the way. Remember, your life is a journey and not a destination!

Don't become overwhelmed by that ocean of health information on psoriasis out there written by all those armchair experts, just enjoy your life for what it is, your recovery will be that much quicker if you can just *stop worrying about your*

health. And if you worry less there is less chance you will verbalize these anxious thoughts you hold, and that has to be a good thing.

Stress and Your Autonomic Nervous System.

What you are about to read is something I will often try to explain to patients who pay me a visit, it is an explanation of the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and how it can bring you a lot of joy or a lot of grief in your life. When you understand this system reasonably well, you will be in a good position to be able to more effectively balance your ANS and bring about harmony to your nervous system that in turn can have a tremendously positive effect on your immune system.

The stronger your immune system, the better your body will be able to resist psoriasis and the quicker it will be able to recover from virtually any illness.

I consider this information to be priceless and one of those gold nuggets you will find in the Psoriasis Program. For those in particular who have had chronic psoriasis for many years, a healthy, well-balanced ANS that in turn can build a powerful immune system will be worth more than the most powerful dietary supplement or herbal medicine you could ever wish to buy.

The best awareness you can have is self-awareness of how stress can push your buttons and what you can do about it. Your autonomic nervous system is the system that automatically regulates your body in times of stress, and then helps to de-regulate your body and chill it out after any stressful event. The sympathetic nervous system is the accelerator of stress, it primes your body in preparation for any upcoming stressful event, no matter how small (like hurting your toe) or how big (like jumping out of a plane) and your parasympathetic nervous system is the brake and will help to normalize your body after any stressful event. Now let's look at this fantastic system a little more closely.

Your autonomic nervous system is a part of your nervous system that regulates key involuntary functions of the body, including the activity of the heart muscle; the smooth muscles, including the muscles of the intestinal tract; and the glands. The autonomic nervous system has two separate divisions: the sympathetic nervous system, which accelerates the heart rate, constricts blood vessels, and raises blood pressure, and the parasympathetic nervous system, which slows the heart rate, increases intestinal and gland activity, and relaxes sphincter muscles.

Of all of your body's systems, your nervous system is most probably the most fragile. Its delicate balance is easily affected by emotional, physical and chemical factors or more commonly by a combination of these stresses. As a result of an imbalance, you can readily suffer from a wide variety of health problems, and because your entire body is controlled by your nervous system, chronic stress has been linked with just about every single illness known to man.

Emotional Stress Affects Your Nervous System The Most

What I have noticed after having treated many patients with stress-related illness is that powerful emotional events occurring in that person's life are frequently linked with the actual cause of their poor health.

When I carefully look at the patient's time line, and ask the question: "When can you last remember feeling truly well?" the person can generally recall one or several stressful events which took place before they became unwell. If you have been unwell for several years, ask yourself what happened in your life *before* you became sick. An event may have occurred up one year prior, but typically it will have been in the months leading up to you becoming unwell.

With psoriasis, the patient may well have had it so long they forget what started it, what the triggers are, but I've found the onset was often precipitated after a series of stressful events. The person's immune system may have been struggling for some time and I've typically seen a patient developing psoriasis after a few rounds of antibiotics or some other kind of immune type of drug. What I've commonly noticed is a cluster of stressful events occurring in the patient's life which started to cause adrenal fatigue, and then their immune system became increasingly compromised leading to leaky gut syndrome, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth and a rampant yeast infection or SIBO (small intestinal bacterial overgrowth) then ensued, culminating in psoriasis. (See my other book called Psoriasis - Understanding Stress and Immunity for more comprehensive information on adrenal fatigue).

Stress Is A Nervous System Reaction

Your autonomic nervous system (ANS) is the part of your nervous system that maintains harmony and a sense of inner equilibrium inside your body. Whatever you feel, your ANS will be feeling, and in fact, anything you feel "automatically" your ANS will be responsible for. For example, your appetite, your mood, your ability to think clearly and even your sexual urges are all controlled by your ANS. Excitement, dread, fear, anger, hunger and sleep all have their home in the ANS. But as you are about to see, the ANS can bring us to heaven as well as make us feel like we are in hell!

It is important to understand that your ANS is divided into two distinctly separate nervous systems, one which stimulates the nerve fibers, the sympathetic nervous system or SNS, and the other which sedates nerve fibers, the parasympathetic nervous system or PNS. It may be easier for you to remember that the SNS is the accelerator and the PNS is the brake.

It is the ANS that gets our body ready to rally for any likely emergency it may face, and this will occur whether the emergency is real or imaginary. It makes no difference really, for your brain cannot tell the difference between a real or imaginary stress. The well-known "fight-or-flight" response as discovered by the famous endocrinologist Dr. Hans Selye, is the main system that is stimulated by any potentially stressful event in the body, the sympathetic nervous system.

When your body is in a healthy state of balance, there is a smooth transition between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems not unlike a considerate and courteous driver who gently accelerates and then gently brakes. It is a pleasure travelling in a vehicle driven by a person who

understands the gentle balance between powering a motor car up when required, but has learned equally when to power it down smoothly.

The example I like to explain of a healthy balance is the reaction between a cat and a dog; it illustrates both parts of the ANS and how in the natural world they can work in perfect harmony.



When a cat comes into contact with a dog, its sympathetic nervous system will go on red alert, the cat's body is fully and automatically mobilized in a fraction of a second. Its eyes open up and the pupils dilate, its fur stands on end and all her muscles straighten and tighten up, it hisses violently and prepares for attack with claws and fangs bared. The cat's heart rate will have gone up considerably and it is prepared to do battle, all in less than a quarter of a second! If the dog is smart, he will remember the last painful encounter he had and move away. In a flash, the cat's parasympathetic nervous system will kick in and it will lie down and stretch out and begin licking its fur.

This is a wonderful display of a healthy balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, but in reality it is not what happens to humans! Cats don't drive cars, pay hefty mortgages or have to worry about taxes.

You see, in a healthy and balanced body these two branches of the ANS maintain perfect harmony. The SNS allows us to act and effectively deal with any kind of stress in our lives, its responses sharpen the mind, quicken the pulse, tense our musculature and move blood to the areas we need in order to escape the threat (constrict the blood vessels). But after this danger has passed, the PNS will take over and calm our mind, relax the blood vessels (dilate), decrease the heartbeat, move blood back to our digestive organs, stimulate our immune system and clear away any metabolic wastes like residues of adrenalin and lactic acid.

This is how it should happen, but in reality it doesn't really occur this way in humans. Tension and action should be followed by relaxation and inaction, a yin and yang balance. In today's world many of us have to stay on guard and rarely find downtime or "me" time.

If the imbalance becomes chronic it can often lead to a whole variety of stress-related symptoms. And for those with psoriasis it can spell one aggravation after another. Many people with psoriasis I have seen don't seem to realize that great health requires great balance, harmony and equilibrium between the body and the mind.

Muscular Tension Is Common With Stress



Do you suffer with a sore lower back, tight neck and shoulders or have tension headaches regularly? What I've noticed is that many people I've seen with psoriasis of several years duration also complain of sore and tight muscles, and these muscles can differ from person to person. There happens to be six hundred and twenty different skeletal muscles, but there are also a lot of smooth muscles found throughout your body, for example in your digestive system. There are many blood vessels in addition which have smooth muscles, and many of these can potentially go into a state of contraction with sympathetic stress overload, resulting in cramps, spasms and the many and varied other symptoms produced by circulatory insufficiencies.

If your parasympathetic nervous system is unable to maintain a steady balance to counter the effects of the sympathetic nervous system, toxins and stress by-products can build-up as they become trapped in muscles, and your muscles can become even more tense, contracted and painful.

But if your parasympathetic nervous system could be activated and maintain a regular state of balance, a whole new world will open up to you.

It's time to explore the wonderful world of the parasympathetic nervous system, the PNS. While a sympathetic nervous system can make us feel like we are in the fires of hell at times, the parasympathetic nervous system has the ability to make us feel like we are in heaven.

The PNS brings us to that contented place of peace and harmony and allows us a much greater sense of well-being, it expands what was contracted, it calms what was tense, it clicks things back into place and pulls things back into line that were overstretched. The PNS is even responsible for great nights sleep and will have you waking feeling thoroughly refreshed. This nervous system calms and relaxes the mind, it is conducive to creative and imaginative thinking, allays anxiety and banishes depression. It slows the heartbeat and steadies the pulse; it improves your immune system's capabilities and improves your digestion by encouraging the production of digestive enzymes and the movement of foods and wastes through the gut. It relaxes all the muscles, blood vessels and internal organs so that the movement of nutrients and wastes are encouraged.

Boosting Your Parasympathetic Nervous System

The important point to understand that we do need the sympathetic response, but more than anything, we need to maintain a balance between the nervous system that activates (SNS) and de-activates (PNS) our responses. As a culture, in the Western world we have literally trained ourselves to override the ANS in favor of a more convenient and faster and electronic computer-based lifestyle.

Even for the sake of physical fitness, many people today are encouraged to engage in exercises that are challenging and physically demanding, and these are often high-intensity exercises can be exhausting and quite stressful on the sympathetic nervous system.

I have found on many occasions when I ask a patient what she does to relax, she may well reply with "But Eric, I exercise every day" It is interesting how

most folks don't see exercise as being a stressful activity on the body, and in my opinion it needs to be balanced out with regular and daily less stressful activities. Even though regular exercise and keeping in top form will allow you to have much more control over your autonomic nervous system, it is important to understand that a healthy balance between exercise and relaxation will keep your ANS in a much better form than if you just do the one and forego the other.

Even though most of us do not enjoy the more extreme effects of sympathetic dominance such as sweaty palms, muscular tension, headaches, palpitations, anxiety and sleepless nights, unfortunately many of us are unwilling to sacrifice our lifestyles of staying up late at night, eating poorly and working 24/7 which all contribute to the dominance of our sympathetic nervous system. Others enjoy the buzz of base, bungee or parachute jumping, various motor sports, white water rafting or jet boating, jet-skiing or any one of a dozen or more such extreme sports. All of these activities significantly boost the sympathetic nervous system.

There are many different kinds of therapies and exercise that are aimed at boosting your PNS. So how can you increase your parasympathetic responses and what are some of the best ways for you to gain this balance back into your life? I'm glad you asked, and now I'll explain some of the best ways to boost your parasympathetic nervous system. Unlike conventional medicine which relies on anti-anxiolytic drugs to calm a person down, natural medicine can be highly effective at strengthening the parasympathetic nervous system, and there are many different techniques and treatments that can be of assistance like meditation, self-hypnosis, various breathing and relaxation techniques, yoga, tai chi, and Chi gong, reflexology and various massage techniques all of which can make you feel relaxed and calm and in control of all of your bodily functions.

Buteyko Breathing

"The essence of my method is in decreasing the depth of breathing." Professor K.P.Buteyko

I am a convert and a big fan of the Buteyko breathing method and regularly refer patients to a Buteyko specialist. Were you aware that many people in fact over-breathe (hyperventilate), and all too many believe that deep breathing is one of the best ways of stimulating the PNS when in fact it stimulates the SNS, the stress response!

Professor Konstantin Buteyko was born into the small farming community of Ivanitsa (about 150km from Kiev) in 1923. In 1946, he enrolled into the First Medical Institute in Moscow to train as a medical doctor. In 1953 Dr. Buteyko was given a practical assignment that involved monitoring patients' breathing, and spent many hundreds of hours recording their breathing. It was during this time that Professor Buteyko discovered that incorrect and deep breathing caused a wide range of health problems. There after, most of his professional medical life was devoted to researching, studying respiration and refining his breathing method that has helped thousands of people throughout the world to overcome their asthma and other breathing conditions.

Breathing is one activity that has a most profound effect on your parasympathetic nervous system, and most people will be quick to tell you that

deep breathing is the correct way to induce relaxation, and that to practice deep breathing on a daily basis is most advantageous during times of stress and anxiety. Currently, a popular e-book on overcoming psoriasis states that "Correct breathing is deep breathing", when in fact deep breathing is *not* the right way to breathe; Buteyko in fact states (after studying respiration and its effects on human health for 50 years) that "the essence of my method is in *decreasing* the depth of breathing". Professor Konstantin Buteyko, a Russian physician, developed a slower breathing method that has been named the Buteyko breathing method; it has been used since the 1940s to alleviate many different health conditions. Buteyko found that hyperventilation is the primary cause of many medical conditions and thus his program is based on *slowing down breathing rates* to within normal parameters. The Buteyko program includes guidelines for correct diaphragmatic breathing and learning to breathe in and out through the nose only.

The reason that slow breathing is so effective is that during times of stress, heart rate and respiration rapidly increase as the sympathetic nervous system takes over.

Correct breathing (which helps to balance the correct oxygen/carbon dioxide level) helps convince the body there is no immediate danger and allows the parasympathetic nervous system to regain control.

The Buteyko breathing method is a strategy to retrain dysfunctional breathing based on the theory that many diseases result from an abnormal breathing pattern. To be more specific, conditions such as asthma, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, panic disorders, high blood pressure, etc. are believed to be the body's responses (a defense mechanism) to hyperventilation or in simple terms; over-breathing. The Buteyko theory is based on the understanding that over-breathing disturbs the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in our lungs, according to Professor Buteyko, more than 200 different chronic diseases are essentially just one, which he called "the deep-breathing disease". By simply decreasing the depth of breathing, thus allowing carbon dioxide in the lungs to reach the desired level of 6.5, breathing normalizes and symptoms can disappear. Though most people may think of it as a poison, carbon dioxide may, in fact, be the "breath of life".

If you want to really learn how to breathe properly and overcome excessive yawning, coughing, sneezing, sniffing, sighing or any one of a host of breathing related problems then I can highly recommend that you get in touch with your local certified Buteyko practitioner. This technique requires only a small amount of practice each day and will soon become second nature.

Here are some of the benefits of the Buteyko method of breathing:

- Deal with stress and anxiety quickly and effectively
- Enjoy more energy and a happier state of mind
- Control the feeling of panic attacks
- Safely reduce or eliminate medication in time
- Sleep soundly through the night
- Have a clear nose - experience the joy of being able to smell again

- Eliminate snoring for a better night's sleep for you and your partner
- Monitor your condition without gadgets or machinery
- Return to activities or places you love, but have avoided because of your health
- Enjoy physical activity without fear of asthma attacks or other breathing problems
- Improve your athletic performance, stamina and recovery time
- Have freedom from symptoms related to chronic conditions
- Reduce snoring, sniffing, wheezing, shortness of breath
- Gain knowledge about your medication and its side effects
- Eliminate sore throats and hoarseness
- Reduce the incidence of headaches, earaches and stomach aches
- Enhance exercise and sports performance, have more stamina
- Greatly reduce your absentee rate at work or school

Nasal Breathing, Not Mouth Breathing

The Buteyko method emphasizes the importance of nasal breathing, which protects the airways by humidifying, warming, and cleaning the air entering the lungs. Many people breathe through their mouth however, do you? By keeping the nose clear and encouraging nasal breathing during the day, nighttime symptoms can also improve. Nasal breathing only during any physical exercise is another key element of the Buteyko method, and you will find that your performance will improve if you adhere to this.

Reduced Breathing Exercises

The main focus of the Buteyko method involves controlling your breath, and to consciously reduce your breathing rate and volume that is in contrast to deep breathing exercises recommended by most. Once you have spent time practicing and retraining yourself it will become instinctive and you won't look back. The Buteyko method uses a measurement called the CP or controlled pause that means the amount of time you can hold your breath comfortably after you exhale, until you need to breath again. The MP or maximum pause is the same, but with specially taught exercises that distract your brain, you learn to push out your controlled pause. Success comes as you are able to comfortably hold your breath in the out position for a minute or longer, and this will signify that you are breathing for one person. The less you can comfortably hold your breath for, the more you are over-breathing and the more people you are breathing for.

Abdominal Breathing

This is the most natural form of breathing but not familiar to most. If you have ever watched a baby or an animal breathe you will notice that their way of breathing is slow and that their belly rather than their chest expands. Supplying air to the lower part of your lungs is what belly breathing is all about and it is almost impossible for you to be tense and stressed and belly-breathe at the same time.

Lie down or get seated in a comfortable position that supports your entire body and place your hands (palms down) on your abdomen just below your belly button. Close your eyes and slowly inhale (remember, nose only, keep your mouth closed at all times). Imagine you have a balloon inside your lower abdomen you are trying to blow up where you have placed your hands and as you breathe in you are slowly inflating the balloon; and as you exhale; you are deflating it. Concentrate on your belly and not your chest as you inhale. I imagine that I'm at the beach and that when I breathe in that a wave is coming into shore and when I breathe out that it is going back out again. I can even hear the sound the ocean makes and have found that this relaxes me within two minutes. This exercise is best practiced daily for about five to ten minutes and before you know it, you will soon belly breathe when you are not even aware of it. Abdominal breathing is one of the most powerful ways to induce the parasympathetic response and should be practiced daily, remember, you only need to do this for less than ten minutes a day. The best time to do this exercise is between two to four in the afternoon, this is the time when your adrenal glands are in the low part of their 24 hour cycle and you will naturally feel a little tired and relaxed. Now try to incorporate this breathing technique as part of your TPM (twenty Peaceful Minutes) sessions I'm just about to outline.

Twenty Peaceful Minute Sessions (TPM)

Meditation? That word has always had strange connotations and sounds more like some weird kind of cult activity to me; I prefer the term TPM or Twenty Peaceful Minutes. I read a book written by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Les Hewitt some years ago called "The Power of Focus" that described this relaxation tip, and the TPM term kind of stuck. This type of relaxation tip is something I've been recommending in my clinic for over twenty years and I get great feedback from those who have taken this technique on board.

Ok, so this is where I am asking for a commitment, I would like you to start regular relaxation sessions for yourself at least three times weekly for about twenty minutes at a time. Now tell me honestly, is sixty minutes a week too much? Many people may spend this much each and every day just watching sitcoms, "liking" somebody's stuff on Facebook, playing Candy Crush, talking on the phone or wasting time by not planning what they are doing next. How would you like to have a sense of inner calm and reduced tension and irritability like you haven't experienced for years? It is so simple, just find a carpeted floor (not a bed, you are not going to sleep, you are just having a rest) and lie down on your back. Take your shoes off and loosen your waistband. Make sure you won't get disturbed - no kids, people, computers or especially telephones or beeping devices of any description around you, etc. I want you to just relax and take a nice slow deep breath in, being sure to breathe in as I have mentioned above - abdominal breathing, don't breathe in a shallow pattern into your chest. It's all a bit weird and foreign at first, I know, I can assure you that very soon you will get the hang of it, and that these mini siestas will rejuvenate your energy, allowing you to stay relaxed and focused well into the evening instead of collapsing on the sofa never to stir again until bedtime. This extra burst of energy will allow you to spend time with your family.

The ultimate time to have your TPM sessions are between 2 – 4.00pm, this is because cortisol (a main stress hormone) is then at its lowest point of production during the day and you will naturally feel a sense of tiredness or fatigue. With these sessions, your heart rate will drop, your digestion will relax, your immune profile will increase and you will soon start to experience a sense of inner calm and serenity. With this sense of inner calm comes a release of tension – you will actually become aware of the muscles that tighten up when you are more relaxed. Twenty minutes is about the right time, and when you do these sessions you may want to take advantage of visualization, just visualize that your psoriasis is entirely gone. All those pesky signs and symptoms are no more and you see yourself as health and radiant. The most successful people in this world are those who believe in themselves and never gave up believing. Have the courage and belief that your psoriasis is only temporary and the your are getting better every day in every way. Imagine beautiful clear skin, no more flaking, burning or cracked skin. Imagine people not looking at you or staring at you anymore in summer when you go out. Imagine.

“Ordinary people believe only in the possible. Extraordinary people visualize not what is possible or probable, but rather what is seemingly “impossible”. And by visualizing the impossible, they begin to see it as absolutely possible.” – *Cherie Carter-Scott*

I firmly believe that it is as important to schedule these relaxation TPM sessions, as it is to schedule your regular business meetings. The most progressive organizations realize that people pushing themselves until they drop does not achieve a highly productive workforce. You don't need to lower your performance standards; you just need to recognize that being at home with the kids or being at work and expecting a high level of productivity requires a high amount of energy which in turn requires your body to recover as well. Look at the big picture, how much time do you take off each week? And how many weeks a year do you schedule for fun? Are you happy with your life?

“I must be available 24 hours a day” is the passionate excuse today for having a smart phone. Do you really have to monitor those “urgent” calls, most of which aren't urgent at all? By slotting in regular TPM sessions you can dramatically help to reduce the amount of self-induced stress and tension in your life and you will soon realize that being available at all times can be a big trap as well as a continual source of stress. Check your emails twice daily, not hourly!

How our grandparents survived without mobile phone technology or Facebook I'll never know, but I think they coped just fine and always appeared to have the time to talk, unlike most of us today who are just too plain busy all the time. By making sure you take regular time out from your busy life, and by engaging in regular TPM sessions, you will start to begin to replenish your mental and emotional energy levels and actively diffuse tension in your life.

The Quiet Pond

I like this parasympathetic nervous system boosting tip, and it is one I got after I read Dr. Wilson's book on adrenal fatigue. Have you ever sat by a quiet pond and just gazed into the water? You look at the ducks, feel the sun and wind and listen to the noises of nature as you let your cares and worries slip away off your shoulders. It is amazing just how refreshing a walk in the local park can be, and just to sit beside the pond and forget about the world.

Once you've been to the pond (or beach, mountains, woods, etc.) a few times, take it all in and let your senses bathe in the splendor that nature has provided us with, those wonderful sounds and smells and feeling of the natural elements like the sun and wind, it becomes easier to go to your imaginary quiet pond in the comfort of your own home, or even at a busy airport, during a train ride or any other place you may feel a little tense, stressed or nervous. Just sit down, close your eyes, and smell those smells, hear those subtle sounds, and feel those elements and instantly transport your mind back to that place of serenity. You did leave your iPhone at home, didn't you?

Remember, your mind doesn't know the difference between a real or imaginary place. Everybody has the capability of carrying his or her own quiet pond around within, and once you have used this technique several times you will find it easy to do. I fly frequently and have found this technique to be wonderful after the seatbelt signs go off and we are in the air, I close my eyes, feel and see the beach, I can hear the crashing waves and seagulls and even feel the squelching sound that sand makes as I walk on it. I can smell suntan lotion and the salty air, what a wonderful yet imaginary experience. My quiet TPM pond is something I always do on the flights, and once I arrive at my destination I feel relaxed, focused and fresh. Now close your eyes and imagine.

You can find your quiet pond every day, just move away from your computer, stay seated and drop your shoulders, relax those facial muscles (specially your jaw), close your eyes and take a few slow breaths in through your nose and into that belly. Imagine that pond or mountain, beach, forest or your special place and feel the sun on your face, and the sound of birds and smells of nature. Bring your senses into play as you fully relax your body, the long-term memory for the sense of smell is one of the strongest, so be sure to smell with your imagination. Remember the smell of a beautiful rose, a pine forest, freshly cut grass or an approaching rainstorm? Just close your eyes and imagine, it's not hard to do. By doing this exercise at a particular time of day, just like breakfast, your body will soon know when it is time to do your regular relaxation session, and don't be surprised if your mind starts giving you a few subconscious signals. Find your quiet pond every day and refresh yourself, regardless of where you are and what is going on around you.

Chewing Food Properly and Slowly

Did you know that the act of slowing down when you eat foods and chewing your foods slowly and carefully has a stimulating effect on your parasympathetic nervous system? I'll bet you didn't. And, did you also know that up to one third of people eat their main meal in front of a wide screen television? Tell me how

you can concentrate on your meal and digest it properly if you are watching some show about a serial killer? This is absurd as thinking you are capable of texting while driving your automobile at sixty miles an hour.

What this 2012 study⁵ revealed was that a randomized trial of 120 patients who had had abdominal surgery had a reduced level of inflammation in their digestive system from chewing gum before and after surgery, when compared to those who did not chew any gum. It was noted that their parasympathetic nervous system had become greatly activated leading to a decrease in pro-inflammatory mediators and an improved immune profile in their digestive system. This down-regulation of the immune system's inflammatory cascade (via stimulation of the vagus nerve) enhanced post-operative recovery by reducing the chances of any infection, pain and inflammation. And all of this was achieved simply by the act of chewing gum!

Do you slow down when you eat your meals, or do you gulp your food down in twenty to thirty seconds flat? Try this trick, record how long it takes you to eat your meal, and then to double the time it normally takes you. That will allow you to chew your food more slowly and thoroughly and will help to stimulate your vagus nerve to give your PNS a boost. When your parasympathetic nervous system becomes increasingly activated, it will ensure a good production of saliva, increased motility of food and stool through the digestive system and relaxed sphincter muscles that will enable easier swallowing, digestion and defecation. The bottom line is that your digestive system will work better if you slow down and chew your foods more thoroughly. Your bowel will work better too, and I've heard many patients over the years tell me how amazed they were with just this one single tip. All common sense and basic 101 digestive physiology stuff, but who teaches the basic stuff in the 21st Century when we think we are smarter than nature?

Laughter Is The Best Medicine

What is there to laugh about when you have psoriasis you might say, when in fact there is plenty to laugh about! I have always noticed that the best outcomes come to those who remain positive and optimistic about their recovery and who begin to enjoy life once again.

You could laugh about the fact that you have just invested in the Psoriasis Program and have started to implement the strategies outlined in my booklets. This will put you miles ahead those psoriasis patients who just commonly tend to focus on psoriasis pills, creams or ointments, because if you follow my program your recovery is almost assured, and that should bring a smile to your face. How can I be so confident you ask, after all, you have tried all the pills, lotions and potions and STILL you have psoriasis. You have seen a dozen or more doctors and skin specialists in the past and have maybe even given up of hoping for a complete resolution of your psoriasis. Well, I'm laughing now, because the very act of you investing in my Psoriasis Program tells me one thing. You have not given up and still have some belief that one day your luck might just turn. Well, if you follow my program carefully and pay attention to the information in the several booklets I've written on psoriasis, your luck will indeed turn and you will recover.

Have you noticed that when you smile it triggers a smile in those around you? When you laugh others will in turn laugh. Happiness and laughter when shared will cement your relationships with family and friends and is a powerful trigger for strengthening your immune system. A great sense of humor will help to pull you through some of your darkest days of your psoriasis, and if you can't laugh about your own situation, just hang out with a friend who laughs and smiles a lot, because she will be like a breath of fresh air or the sun on your shoulders when all is gloom and doom around you.

"Through humor, you can soften some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it." - Bill Cosby

My wife and I have a friend called Theresa, a single mom on her own with six kids who would happen to be one of the happiest ladies I know. I've never seen Theresa without a smile on her face and even when she speaks on the phone you can feel that radiant smile and hear her laughing. Not that Theresa has a lot to laugh about, at times she hasn't even got enough money to pay the power bill or feed her kids but she nevertheless still manages a smile. This is in contrast to another lady I used to know who along with her husband have long retired after selling their manufacturing business for many millions when they were only in their early fifties. Judy never seemed to smile and perpetually complained about the cost of living and how her kids never seemed to visit. They have overseas holidays twice annually, the very best home and cars and are in good health. Yet never a smile, a nice word to say about anybody and certainly no joy in Judy and Neil's life. I don't cultivate friendships with people anymore that are no fun to be with, life is just too short to associate with folks who walk around looking like the world is coming to an end.

Have you noticed that money does not make you happy? It can make your life easier, but happiness is a state of mind, and like all states of mind it can be cultivated.

Anatomy Of An Illness As Perceived By The Patient

If people only knew the healing power of laughter and joy, many of our finest doctors would be out of a business. Joy is one of nature's greatest medicines. Joy is always healthy. A pleasant state of mind tends to bring abnormal conditions back to normal.

Catherine Ponder

One book I'd like ALL of my patients to read is called "Anatomy of an Illness" by the author Norman Cousins. This best-selling groundbreaking classic book was written by a person with a life-threatening illness and how he overcame his health-challenges through having a sense of humor.

Go to Amazon and buy it, it will change the way you view laughter and having a sense of humor and your recovery from any illness, including chronic psoriasis.

Anatomy of an Illness was the first book by a patient that spoke about taking charge of our own health. It started the revolution in patients working with their doctors and using humour to boost their bodies' capacity for healing. When Norman Cousins was diagnosed with a crippling and irreversible disease, he forged an unusual collaboration with his doctor, and together they were able to

beat the odds. The doctor's genius was in helping his patient to use his own powers: laughter, courage, and tenacity. The patient's talent was in mobilizing his body's own natural resources, proving what an effective healing tool the mind can be. This remarkable story of the triumph of the human spirit is truly inspirational reading, I recommend you get a copy.

Laughter Is The Best Medicine For Both Mind And Body

A good sense of humor prevents hardening of the attitudes - Anonymous

Laughter and having fun have an amazingly powerful effect on so many aspects of your health and wellbeing, if the effects of this "medicine" could be made into a drug it would make a drug company like Pfizer many billions in annual revenue. Unlike pharmaceutical drugs, laughter is not toxic or addictive to the body in any way, shape or form. But best of all, laughter is free, fun, easy to use and has no known side effects, maybe apart from sore ribs or falling off a chair from laughing too much. 😊

Laughter can be the perfect antidote when you have psoriasis; it works faster than a drug and can instantly transform your mind away from those annoying and aggravating symptoms. With this renewed power to stimulate and heal your immune system and consequently renew your body, having a sense of humor can be a tremendous resource for those with psoriasis. Laughter lightens your burden, allows you to more easily connect with others and keeps you more centered, alert and focused on your real problems like avoiding the real causes which maintain your psoriasis, allowing you to make those powerful and corrective changes to your attitude, your diet and your lifestyle.

When you smile and laugh a lot more like Theresa, you will find that people will naturally be attracted to you. Theresa has many friends who help her out at a moments notice, when her garden needed attention and it was overgrown (her landlord threatened to evict her), about twenty volunteers turned up and after one day her rented property looked absolutely amazing! When you frown and complain a lot, people tend to avoid you, regardless of your material wealth. Judy has only one real friend, a lady with plenty of money also. She has to find her happiness through travel, fancy clothes and all the material things in life that rarely bring any inner happiness.

5 Reasons Why Laughter Is Good For Your Health

1. Laughter Dispels Stress.

Research has shown that those who laugh regularly have less chance of developing a stress related health challenge like heart disease or cancer. Dr. Ian Gawler is well known as an Australian pioneer in Mind-Body Medicine and therapeutic meditation. He is a long-term cancer survivor and an articulate advocate for a healthy and balanced lifestyle. The author of 6 bestselling books, Ian has spent the last 30 years developing a wide range of self-help techniques that integrate lifestyle practices, such as a healthy diet, regular exercise,

positive thinking and affirmations along with meditation combined with contemporary Western medical cancer treatments. Dr. Gawler noticed years ago after having put tens of thousands of cancer patients through his cancer retreat that most all patients had one or more significant emotional stress in their lives from twelve to eighteen months before their cancer diagnosis.

2. Laughter Relaxes The Body.

A good laugh dispels tension and stress and can leave you feeling relaxed for up to an hour after. Having an orgasm with sex and laughter both tend to have similar effects on the body, they both help the body release stored up tension and can induce a deep state of relaxation thereafter. One of my patients is a certified laughter therapist, how awesome is that? Her facial expressions can make me laugh that much my sides hurt!

3. Laughter Boosts Immunity.

Laughter boosts the parasympathetic nervous system that in turn down regulates and balances the production of the stress hormones adrenalin and cortisol. A well-balanced adrenal gland system in turn can assist in boosting the production and activity of lymphocytes, specialized white blood cells that produce infection-fighting antibodies.

4. Laughter Triggers Endorphin Release.

Researchers at Loma Linda University in Southern California found that laughter stimulates the production of beta-endorphins, the body's natural painkillers, as well as human growth hormone (HGH), which help improve a person's immune system profile and assist in the regulation of a person's metabolism. Endorphins make you feel great and temporarily help to reduce the pain and sensations you may be experiencing with your yeast infection.

5. Laughter Protects Your Cardiovascular System.

Research spanning many years has shown that those with a sense of humor tend to have a lot less problem with their heart and circulatory system as they grow older. A reduction in inflammation occurs with laughter that improves a person's immune profile, and this reduction in inflammatory mediators is thought to help dramatically reduce one's risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Laugh And Stay Emotionally Healthy

I grew up in a household with a father who had a good sense of humor, but my grandfather was outrageous when it came to having a laugh and my dad and granddad would always play tricks on each other. It's the funny things in life, as well as the tragic events, that you never quite seem to forget. Have you ever done anything crazy in your life that made others laugh out loud?

Emotional happiness leads to a state of physical happiness and is the basis for mind over matter. It has been said that people are as happy as they make up their minds to be, so, have you made up your mind to be like Theresa or to be like Judy? It's your life and you only get one of them.

Having a positive sense of humor will make recovery from your psoriasis that much easier because you remain more optimistic and will be able to see a clear path to recovery, humor will help you through those tough days when you feel terrible. It will help you when you feel disappointed and annoyed because of

unmet expectations because your recovery may be delayed or protracted due to unforeseen circumstances that invariably arise. I have noticed that those who laugh a lot develop the courage and strength to go on, and on, and on.

Those who laugh will find it difficult to feel anxious, tense or angry. Humor has an incredible way of shifting your perspective and allows you to engage with others in a much less threatening way, have you noticed?

Your relationships with others, including your health-care practitioner, partner, family and friends will improve because your positive and humorous attitude helps to foster a stronger emotional connection. It is almost impossible to disagree with somebody when you are in a positive and happy mood too, by the way.

12 Opportunities For You To Laugh

1. Become a person who plays practical jokes occasionally on others, but know when to goof around and when not to. Again, it's all about balance and knowing when the time is right. Have you ever dropped a plastic ice cube (complete with a fly in it) into somebody's glass, given a friend a sandwich which contains a rubber fried egg in it, or had itching powder put in your T-shirt? Ever tried wearing a pair of those Groucho Marx glasses and popped a cigar into your mouth when you went to a party? I like going into those gag shops where you can still buy all this kind of stuff.
2. Go to watch a live comedian, these people just make me laugh every time, I have my favorites and can sometimes laugh so much it hurts! Do you live in a big city? Then go to your local comedy club.
3. Host a fancy dress party and give a prize for the most outrageous costume!
4. When you talk with somebody, make sure you ask what they did today that made him or her smile or laugh.
5. Host a games night with a bunch of friends, invite only those people that make you laugh. An evening like this will do your immune system more good than an entire month on antibiotics.
6. Read funny books or buy some books with gags and jokes and read them out to others.
7. Invite a few friends to your place and have a food fight. Make up a heap of spaghetti and have cream pies for dessert, you'll laugh that much your sides will split open. I'd suggest you eat outside. My 14 year-old son had a fantastic time shoving a cream pie in my face during his birthday party in front of his friends, they still talk about it many years later. Talk about some father-son bonding time! You may think of these suggestions as weird or downright crazy, but they sure do make you laugh.
8. Spend time with young children, they haven't forgotten how to laugh and have lots of fun like their all-too-serious parents often have.

9. Play with your cat or dog, especially with a young pet, just like young kids, they still know how to have a good time and not take life too seriously.
10. Read the funny pages of your newspaper or magazine.
11. Do something crazy like you did when you were a pre-teen! I'm known to do strange things at home and never take life too seriously.
12. And lastly, get involved in fun activities like bowling, skating or skiing, go-kart racing, water skiing, karaoke, mini golf or clay pigeon shooting if you are that way inclined. Whatever turns you on is fine, as long as you are having fun with a bunch of other folks and nobody gets hurt.

Conclusion

It is important to understand that humor and laughter are powerful parasympathetic nervous system stimulators. I tell patients that is important to focus on the positive in life and not the negative, because negative beliefs and thoughts are a barrier not only to forming meaningful relationships with those around you, but to recovery from psoriasis as well.

Are things really that bad that you can't at least smile once a day? Is your psoriasis that serious that it has become the entire and negative focus of your life? Is your psoriasis-related health problem completely irreparable and incurable? Are you that ill that you need to concern and upset people around you regularly with bad news flashes? I'll bet you answer a big NO to all these questions. *Then why worry?*

Here are a few ways to kick-start your laughter therapy, try practice smiling at least once each day, it is easy and you will find that by smiling you will break down barriers and others will smile too. Just take a look at your life and count your blessings, there are plenty of things in your life to be grateful for when you really think about it! Be happy that you will soon recover from your psoriasis and think about others who have medical conditions that are terminal; psoriasis is certainly not a terminal condition. Spend time with people who make you feel good and who have a sense of humor and avoid negative or toxic people in your life. It may mean that you will have to leave one or two people behind, then so be it. Just like chemicals and toxins in your body, toxic people are best avoided and purged from your life when necessary. Don't take yourself or life so seriously, life is just too short when you think about it, it is important to have fun and enjoy your life while you can. How boring and mundane your life would be without humor!

Vacations And Unstructured Time

Vacations are an important time for you to take each year as they give you the ability to have plenty of unstructured time. During your vacation, leisure replaces your work as a priority and you become filled with the enthusiasm to explore, travel and learn new things. So indulge in laziness and enjoy spending

times with those you care about the most, spend time with the ones you love, you will be hooked once you feel like this and then will realize the importance of the vacation and unstructured times.

These lazy and self-indulgent days pay big dividends to your health and well being, and once you are back at work you will find yourself more refreshed and focused on the task at hand. I always like to clear my desk and tidy my office up so that when I'm back on deck I can start with a clean slate.

How much time do you take off each week? How many weeks a year do you schedule for fun family time? If you do plan to take a day off, then make sure it is a full twenty-four hours. No emails, no calls, NO business of any kind, just fun and relaxation time. Many business folk are confused about time-out, they think it means no office but mobile phone. Many at-home mothers are also confused, and think that time-out means no washing, cooking or cleaning when in reality it would be great for them to get away for a whole two-days (48 hours) with their girlfriend and to leave the kids with somebody else, like their caring partner, friend or relation.

Schedule your vacation time on your calendar at the beginning of each year and decide when you want to take major breaks and reserve this time, make sure you set your goals because I've found if YOU don't structure your time, somebody else will structure it for you! The important thing here is to develop the habit of regularly creating some total relaxation time, so that when you return from your break you will feel well rested and completely refreshed. This also has the other major benefit of boosting your immune system by way of re-charging your adrenals glands, and this can only be positive for those with a yeast infection.

The other point I didn't mention is that you will sleep plenty when on vacation, as relaxation leads automatically to a very important element in your healing process – a deep and relaxing sleep, and that's the next topic.

Sleep And Insomnia



Laugh and the world laughs with you, snore and you sleep alone.
Anthony Burgess

Up to 30% of the population have a problem sleeping. Do you rely on sleeping pills? In most cases, drugs are not necessary to help you sleep. You have many other options. You may find some of the material on this page helpful if you either can't get to sleep or frequently wake up during the night.

In a recent study, published in the Fall 2011 issue of Psoriasis Forum, the National Psoriasis Foundation's journal for professionals, Callis Duffin and fellow researchers surveyed people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis about their sleep and compared their answers with those of a control group. The results: People with psoriasis reported a higher level of

sleep-related problems and those with psoriatic arthritis had significantly more sleep issues compared to the general population. It is important for those with psoriasis to try and improve their sleep, because healthy levels of sleep can help heal your skin considerably.

Isn't it funny how many of us want to "take" things to improve our sleep, when what we really need to be looking at is improving the simple things first like going to bed when we are actually physically or mentally tired, avoiding stimulants like caffeine and depressants like alcohol if we have regular sleeping issues, and also trying to exercise regularly. Poor sleeping patterns affect so many people I see with psoriasis, is poor sleep affecting you?

Most people with psoriasis at some stage during their lives will suffer from insomnia particularly during the rough times, but when this pattern happens for weeks, months or years on end, it needs sorting out. Working and thinking too much, worried about treatments, stress and sleeplessness feed on each other. When you suffer from stress and fatigue, anxiety or depression, you will have more difficulty in getting a good night's sleep.

By following the self help tips mentioned; you will be surprised how much the quality of your sleep and your life can improve.

The Less Sleep, The Less You Will Cope With Psoriasis

The more tired you become, the less you are capable of coping with stress and the more stressful life seems and more you have a problem going to sleep. Many patients we see in the clinic are victims of the wear and tear of modern 21st century lifestyles, and appear to be caught in this "no-win, no-rest cycle, yet they are probably blissfully unaware that simply doing too much and stress is actually sabotaging their efforts to get a good night's sleep.

Research in the 1970's revealed that stress decreases the time spent in the deepest and most restorative sleep stages and disrupts dream or "rapid-eye-movement" (REM) sleep.

In one study, chronic insomniacs reported that during the time their sleep problems began, they also experienced a greater number of stressful life events than in previous years. These problems include marital problems, financial worries, health problems and the death of a close person or losing their job. Many patients I have seen have cited causes such as "I have not had a regular sleeping pattern since having my children" or "since my separation or divorce", "since my husband died", etc. These sleeping patterns can be changed, you do not have to be plagued with insomnia all your life and having to stay reliant on sleeping aids. It is so true that you don't really appreciate good health until you have a lack of it, what bliss it is to sleep deeply and soundly night after night.

Researchers have associated lack of sleep with a range of damaging physical and psychological conditions. Not getting enough sleep can increase your risk of diabetes, heart problems, depression, substance abuse and anxiety. It can also make you fat, reduce your sex drive, impair your immune system and make it harder for you to pay attention or remember any new information. You need

plenty of sleep; especially good quality deep sleep on a very regular basis, if not you will soon get sick and delay your recovery from psoriasis. Could you imagine if you had a poor sleep pattern for years, and how this could affect your immune system and consequently delay your recovery from psoriasis?

There are no hard or fast rules really in terms of exactly how much sleep you need, and it is unfair to say that you need 8 hours each and every night no exception. Thomas Edison who invented the light bulb amongst other things, slept apparently only a few hours a night yet was one of the most prolific inventors ever, no doubt he would have had an afternoon nap. Albert Einstein, on the other hand, said that he needed eleven hours a night and was at his most creative when he slept from eleven to twelve hours. Have you worked out your individual needs?

You may want to experiment and particularly once you get into the habit of the TPM sessions like I have, you may find that you can get away with going to sleep later yet awake most refreshed an 6.30 am because your mind and body were rested the afternoon before.

Ask Yourself These 7 Sleep Questions:

1. Do you fall asleep within 15 minutes of going to bed, or does it take you *ages* to go to sleep?
2. Do you always need an alarm clock to wake up to?
3. Do you naturally wake within 15 minutes each day at the same time?
4. If you lie down for a nap in the middle of the day, are you in a good sleep within 10 minutes?
5. How are your sleep patterns on the weekends as compared to during the working week?
6. When you go on holidays, do you sleep a lot for 2-3 days in the first week?
7. How does my partner's snoring affect my sleep?

Answers:

1. A healthy person takes about 10 – 20 minutes before they are really asleep. You don't generally get into a healthy deep-sleep pattern by sleeping "as soon as you head hits the pillow". This is because your mind will first go from the beta brain wave (busy thinking & conscious thought patterns) into the alpha brain wave pattern (relaxed, dreamy, "floating", half-asleep/half-awake pattern) Later on in the night you slide into the very refreshing theta brain wave state, and then into the theta brainwave pattern, called the "rapid eye movement" or REM state. This is the important phase as far as feeling great when you awake is concerned. The delta state is even deeper, and a healthy person is in this state for up to 60 minutes. Those who say: "a bomb can go off and I don't wake" are generally in the deeper states such as the delta, because arousal is much more difficult in this state than it is in the alpha. Healthy sleep consists of a combination and repetitive phase of the four above mentioned brain wave states. Interrupting a cycle can have negative consequences. Remember

sometimes just as you dose off that you remember something important? This is because the alpha state allows your mind to be more creative and think "peripherally" about minor trivial problem-solving issues, and you are less focused on the main problems in your life.

2. A good indication that you are getting enough sleep is the ability for you to wake most mornings without an alarm clock. This generally means you are getting enough sleep. In my experience, most people simply don't get enough rest, they tell me they sleep fine, but do they really get the quality of sleep they need? If during the week the alarm wakes you and you turn over, you need more sleep! Using your alarm clock is a good measure for this.

3. Waking up close to the same time each morning, and not waking early then having a disturbed sleep pattern (from midnight to 5.00am) tells me that your hormone patterns are well balanced. If you have a problem with your morning or afternoon energy levels then you may well have a sleeping problem. People with sleeping problems have energy problems, and people who are always fatigued have sleeping issues, have you noticed?

This is a typical presentation in my clinic and I don't generally treat insomnia, I prefer to treat for a lack of energy that tends to improve a person's sleeping pattern profoundly.

4. This is similar to question 1, if you fall asleep rapidly when you lie down in the day you need more sleep. But only when the tiredness is not in relation to meals, i.e.; well away from meals, because if you get tired after eating a meal containing carbs like bread or pasta, it could mean you are a bit low in blood sugar and you may naturally feel a bit tired, Try sleeping for 8 hours a night for 1 week, and if wake up feeling refreshed then try these afternoon naps and you will find that it takes generally much longer to easily sleep in the afternoon after a 5 minute lie down.

5. If you don't get quite enough sleep, your brain will want a catch-up in the weekend generally. If these "catch-ups" continually occur, you may find it harder to function on a Monday morning, because you are starting to shift your waking and sleeping patterns and are pushing them ahead by an hour or two. It is important to get to bed by 9.30pm - 10.00pm at the latest for most people. Get to bed when you feel naturally tired, don't have a nap at 8 or 9.00pm and then stay up until 12.00pm - 1.00am. This is very common today, as we try to squeeze every last drop out of our day due to our increasing workloads. And we prop these habits up with coffee and tea to keep us "topped up" with energy. Are you starting to fade out by 9.00pm - 9.30pm? Then go to bed!

6. If you find that you need more sleep whilst you are on holidays, you are over-working yourself, end of story. If you are away from the stressors and go "phew" when you are away, it would be best to create a sanctuary at your home, a place where you can escape and relax away from phones, kids, computers, and stop always saying "yes" to people so often. How much "you" time do you set aside each day or week? Sleeping more on holidays and weekends indicates an underlying problem with sleep debt, your sleep bank account is going into the red fast and you will soon be bankrupt. i.e.; burnout, unless you service this debt. I recommend to patients that they slow down one

week before going on holidays, what is the point of sleeping for two days when you take a week off, especially when you pay good money for accommodation?

7. If your husband and you are fine in your relationship but he snores and it drives you crazy, it could be really be affecting the quality of your sleep cycle. Your brain needs to be in a combination and repetitive pattern of different brain-wave patterns to allow sleep to be refreshing and fully restorative. If his snoring has bumped you out of a deep sleep state, it could have severely interrupted your sleep cycles. Remember, deep sleep improves your daytime serotonin (the feel good hormone) cycles, which allows you to wake up feeling positive, happy and motivated. Try separate beds for a week or two to see how the quality of your sleep improves. If there is a marked change for the better, consider him getting his snoring sorted, there is help available and by speaking with your doctor you will be able to get a referral for appropriate help. I recommend Buteyko breathing for chronic snorers, and also weight loss and alcohol reduction or cessation, all of these suggestions may help chronic snoring tremendously.

Poor sleep in turn makes coping with a stressful lifestyle more challenging. In time, trying to get by despite sleeplessness can lead to depression, anxiety and other psychological problems.

Developing Regular Habits Will Improve Your Sleep

Try to get into the habit of regular sleep to keep your biological clock in sync. By going to bed around the same time, and getting up at the same time you will soon see that your body starts to fall into the pattern of regularity. Travel can really throw you out, and here again; keep to regular times with eating and sleeping. Learn to understand how important a good night's sleep is to your health, it is one of the most important foundations apart from good nutrition and good emotional health. Learning to develop regular healthy habits in general will pay big rewards in the years ahead as you age, but in the short term it will mean you will recover much faster from psoriasis than those with poor or sloppy sleeping habits.

"Those who think they have no time for health today will sooner or later have to find time for illness tomorrow." *Edward Stanley*

14 Ways To Beat Insomnia

1. Exercise. This will help by allowing your body to deal with tension and stress more effectively, allowing your body and mind a chance to unwind. It could be something as simple as a twenty-minute walk, swim or bike ride at least three times weekly. What's the big deal? And you tell me that you "haven't got the time"? There is an old saying that "those who don't make the time for good health now, will find plenty of time for ill health in time" is a classic. If you get stressed and tensed at work, the ideal time to exercise is later in the day like late afternoon. Exercise when it suits your lifestyle – either early morning or late

afternoon. Exercise is a typical example of investing your time in an activity that is guaranteed to give you rewards later on. A one-hour exercise session makes your other 23 hours so much more effective and the spin off is that you will sleep much more deeply and soundly. Like the Nike people tell you: Just Do It.

2. Never Go To Bed Completely Worn Out Or Very Hungry. This is a big mistake that some make, going to bed too tired will mean that you are not going to get a good night's sleep. Eating a big meal too late will interfere with your sleep as well. Your digestive system may well play up too, giving you plenty of gas, flatus and tummy rumblings. Another tip is not to go to bed on an empty tummy; you may well wake up due to low blood sugar levels, especially if you suffer from adrenal fatigue. Sometimes eating a small snack, even a little piece of cheese can do the trick.

3. Watch the caffeine. No coffee at least 6 – 8 hours before bedtime if you have sleeping problems and like coffee. Coffee, tea or chocolate may stimulate you for several hours after, causing a disturbed or a restless sleep. Be aware that caffeine containing foods or drinks may in addition clash with certain prescription drugs causing sleep issues, so check in with your doctor here. Are your teens up at all hours? I'll bet they have developed a taste for those caffeinated "Energy" soft drinks. They were unheard of when I was a teen, I was told I had to be 15 before I could have a cup of coffee, and now we let kids as young as 7 or 8 have cans with as much caffeine as two cups of coffee! It is time for adults to wake up to the reality of energy drinks with their kids. And you wonder why they are bouncing off the walls at times, funny that!

4. Sleep On A Good Bed. This is a BIG one. You are less likely to get a good night's sleep on a worn out old bed, or one that is too hard or soft or too small. I know from experience, I replaced my bed recently and what a huge difference it has made. Do you wake up regularly with a sore neck or back; is your bed sagging or creaking? Time to replace it, and remember how much time you are sleeping, so why do you put up with a crappy bed? Apparently, American folk on average replace their bed every ten to twelve years, but New Zealanders wait for up to twenty years. If you go to bed tonight and say to yourself "Eric is right, I hate my bed," then I don't think it is a silly idea to invest in a nice new bed. You will wonder why on earth you didn't get a good bed few years ago. It could mean the difference between a great night's sleep and a feeling like you woke up after sleeping all night in a tent. Forget that one-week in the Bahamas this winter, buy the new bed instead. Oh, and by the way, don't forget to replace your pillow each and every year, your neck and back will love you for it.

5. Are You A Sleeping-Pill Taker? A 30% increase in the number of sleeping pills being taken by New Zealanders has one of our opposing political parties calling on the government to look at prescribing habits of doctors in my country. In 2005 more than half a million prescriptions for sleeping pills were dispensed in my country, up by a third on 1999 figures. We should be concerned that more people are feeling enough stress to the point where they feel they need sleeping medications, and we need to be vigilant we are not setting the scene for drug dependency issues down the track. Get your stress sorted sooner rather than later, because stress leads to sleeping issues, which in turn stimulates stress, a real Catch Twenty Two situation. See your naturopath or herbalist for non-drug options to help you sleep at night; instead of pharmaceutical sleeping drugs, I

recommend you try magnesium a half an hour before bedtime, or herbal medicines like passionflower, avena sativa, valerian, hops, and various others depending on your requirements.

6. Smokers Don't Sleep As Deep As Non-Smokers. Research has shown that those who smoke moderate to heavy take longer to fall asleep, awaken more often and spend less time in the REM (deep) sleep phase. Because nicotine withdrawal can last two to three hours after their last puff, smokers may actually wake in the middle of the night craving a cigarette. Ask a reformed smoker, and most will tell you how much their sleep has improved since they kicked the habit.

7. Drink In Moderation. Many people think that a drink will help them get to sleep and stay asleep, but drinkers don't sleep as well than those who drink in moderation or not at all. According to many different studies, even moderate drinking can suppress REM sleep, the deep sleep we need in order to wake up refreshed. Ever noticed that the nights you drink moderately heavy you wake up feeling tired or groggy? Too much booze with dinner can make it hard to fall asleep, and too much later at night can harder to stay asleep. You end up sleeping in fragments and often wake in the early hours in the morning. If I have more than one glass of wine I generally never seem to sleep well and wake up at 1.00am and sleep lightly the rest of the evening, almost guaranteed. Marijuana smokers will certainly find that their sleep improves, the hormone melatonin increases substantially in regular cannabis smokers. But yes, there is a downside – the next day dope smokers will find that they are more tired in afternoon as a consequence and will also crave more sweet foods, which will create fatigue, lethargy and low blood sugar levels.

8. Go For Quality Of Sleep, Not Quantity. I tell my patients that it is the quality that really counts, and six good solid hours is better than eight or even ten hours of light or disturbed sleeping patterns. Don't feel that you need eight solid hours every night anymore than you need to drink "eight glasses of water every day". If five hours does the trick several times a week, you may well find that a nap here or there for twenty minutes may be all you need. Quality counts, so experiment what is right for you.

9. Become A Napper. Some people, like my wife, actually feel worse for naps. Not me, I have a chill-out session at least three times weekly for twenty minutes in my office on a carpeted floor. My TPM sessions, or "twenty peaceful minutes", you have heard me mention this before and find that it really does the trick for me. Try it yourself; these sessions involve lying down on the floor anywhere between the 2.00pm – 4.00 pm. This time slot is probably the best, due to the naturally lower level of cortisol your body produces at this time. I tell my receptionist to hold all calls for this time and relax, do some relaxed abdominal breathing and can feel my mind slipping away. By the time I get up, I feel very refreshed and relaxed. It's what I call my "defrag of the mind". It is not that I lack the sleep; I need these sessions to help me re-focus and get my mind from the busy beta into the relaxed alpha state. Try it, you may find that irritability levels drop off and you become more humane around people if you are a bit anxious, easily stressed or simply try to squeeze too much into your busy life. I make it a habit of going to bed between 10 – 10.30pm every night. I wake at 6.30 every morning feeling refreshed.

10. Time Outs. Here is a simple way to break out of the stress-sleeplessness cycle. Take regular time-out sessions during the day. It could be something as simple as closing your eyes. Several times a day close your eyes, take a few deep and relaxed breaths and meditate on a relaxing scene. It can work wonders. Try the Quiet Pond exercise mentioned previously.

11. Don't Worry & Be More Organized. Some folks lie in bed thinking of what they should have done during the day, their mind racing and thinking about tasks they have to perform the following day. Try to deal with work related distractions *before* you hit the sack. Make a list of tasks before you go to bed may help. Write out anxieties or worries and possible solutions, this will save your mind having to do this whilst you are supposed to be resting. Tell yourself that you will sort it the next day. I tell my patients this: "when you lie down, don't think about any problem that requires a solution", it is easier said than done, but with a little practice it is easily achievable. Try not to go to bed until you resolve disagreements you care about. It is true; we all have disagreements or arguments with our partners or loved ones from time to time. The trick is in resolving the matter *before* bed so your mind can rest. Do you go to bed after an argument and lie there churning things over in your mind? Relax before you go to bed to get yourself in the right frame of mind, and if you do have indifference it is important to resolve the issue as much as possible in order to have a "clear head".

12. Is Melatonin The Answer For Insomnia? Melatonin is a hormone produced in the brain that facilitates sleep, it is available freely on the Internet and I have found that many insomniacs have tried melatonin at some stage. Melatonin is very safe; I have found no evidence of adverse effects even in those who use it for extended periods of time. When you are asleep, melatonin, which is made from the feel good hormone called serotonin, is released from the pineal gland in the brain. When you are awake, serotonin aids in many different functions including muscular contractions. Restless and fidgeting at night are often the result of a confused sleep-wake cycle and can point to a serotonin (too much) or melatonin (not enough) imbalance. Although Melatonin supplements appear to help with better sleep, it is not necessarily better quality or longer sleep. A recent study demonstrated that the differences between 0.01 and 10mg dosages were not significant. In comparison, the average adult human produces 1mg of melatonin in a 24hr period whereas most tablets available on-line come in 2, 3mg or more. Melatonin is still a controversial subject, and my advice before you take melatonin is to try other things first such as the suggestions above, especially magnesium. Magnesium actually helps to prolong the life of melatonin in your brain, and I highly recommend you try 300mg to 400mg about half an hour before bedtime. You may be quite surprised.

13. Try 400 Mgs Of Magnesium Citrate Before Bedtime. Magnesium is one powerful mineral when it comes to relaxing the body and mind, and has helped many people I know sleep better. This is the first dietary supplement you should try if you struggle with sleep and may hold the answer to your insomnia if you need a little extra help. Always try magnesium before you try a sleeping pill. As I mentioned in point 12, try 400mg of magnesium citrate about half an hour before bed instead of the popular sleeping pill Immovane® (Zopiclone).

Magnesium works well, especially if you drop the tea, coffee and chocolate and alcohol from lunchtime onwards.

14. A Cup Of Chamomile Tea Can Be Very Relaxing, it contains a natural sedative and is perfect for many people who suffer from mild anxiety, restlessness and insomnia. Have a cup about one hour before bed, and when combined with magnesium works very well indeed.

Some Final Comments On Sleeping and Psoriasis

Work on getting to bed on time, and do look at implementing in particular some of the parasympathetic nervous system techniques I've outlined previously. Once you start doing this as well as adopting some of the sleeping tips I've recommended, you will most certainly improve the quality and quantity of your sleep and be amazed at how your rapidly your psoriasis will improve, I guarantee it.

Isn't it funny how we always want to "take in" things to improve our sleep, when what we really need is to "take out" things to improve our sleep. By first improving the simple things like going to bed when we are actually physically or mentally tired, learning the art of relaxation (remember that PNS?), by avoiding caffeine and alcohol and also trying to exercise regularly, we are well on the way to a perfect nights sleep. Have a sleep on it.

Are You Exercising Yet?

A vigorous five-mile walk will do more good for an unhappy but otherwise healthy adult than all the medicine and psychology in the world. *Paul Dudley White*

Do want to pick up the pace of your psoriasis improvement? Then you may be surprised to know that exercise can help speed your recovery from psoriasis. Some people are concerned that they may develop a flare-up and avoid exercise, and other psoriasis patients I know don't feel comfortable exercising on public, but it is important to let you know that exercise can be your friend in you quest to improve your skin.

Many people over 50 are simply not active enough, and to prevent heart and circulatory disease and many other diseases of modern civilization, exercise is one of the most important factors. The good news, though, is that even modest amounts of physical activity are good for your health. There is no doubt, the more active you are, the more you'll benefit!

While I have no doubt that regular exercise is important, many people don't place enough value on the fitness that comes from everyday tasks like lifting and chasing children, lugging groceries around, spending time in the garden and even in cleaning your house.

There are so many benefits of being physically active, it will open up a whole new life to you and will be worth it! You'll feel great because your metabolic rate increases resulting in an increased ability to maintain your normal, health weight. You will most certainly feel and be healthier; you will reduce your

chance of getting diabetes, will have lower your blood pressure and even sleep better.

The Three Main Types Of Physical Activity

1. Aerobic or heart and lung fitness.
2. Muscle-strengthening or resistance training.
3. Flexibility exercises or stretching.

You can do physical activity with light, moderate, or vigorous intensity, and the level of intensity depends on how hard you have to work to do the activity. The ultimate is to engage in the different forms of exercise to get the maximum benefit.

How Long Do I Have To Exercise For?

For major health benefits, adults should do at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity daily or about an hour of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week. Naturally, the best option is to do a combination of both. The more you exercise, the easier it becomes and the more you will enjoy it.

You don't have to do the activity all at once! You can break it up into shorter periods of at least 10 minutes each. Running, swimming, walking, bicycling, dancing, and doing other examples of aerobic activity.

If you have a heart problem or chronic disease, such as heart disease, diabetes, or high blood pressure, talk with your doctor about what types of physical activity are safe for you, you may need a check-up and get your blood pressure and heart rate established before you embark on any exercise program, especially if you are in your 50's.

Always talk with your doctor about safe physical activities if you have symptoms such as chest pain or dizziness before you consider any exercise regime.

Ideas For Activity Include:

1. Swimming, snorkelling.
2. Walking the dog.
3. Vacuuming, washing windows - vigorous housework.
4. Climbing the stair instead of using the escalator at airports, shops, etc.
5. Getting off the bus one stop earlier than you have to and walking the rest of the way.
6. Golf, croquet, lawn bowls, etc.
7. Gardening - mowing, pruning, going to the dump, etc.
8. Join a gym/exercise group.

Those With Psoriasis Benefit From Exercise

Dr. Alan Menter, chairman of the division of dermatology at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, believes that exercise can certainly play a significant role in the holistic treatment of psoriasis. Menter mentioned to WebMD that those who have psoriasis are on average 7 percent heavier in body weight than those who don't have psoriasis.

The most probable cause my guess is that those who have psoriasis have more inflammation in their bodies in general, particularly those who are obese. The fatter a person is, the more inflammation they will be producing as a consequence due to their increased number of fat cells, which produce inflammation themselves. So the bigger a psoriasis patient gets, the more inflammation they will be experiencing, the worse the skin flares and the worse the joint pain if they have psoriatic arthritis.

Psoriasis patients also tend to be at a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, and regular exercise will help them to lower these risks as well. Leading psoriasis experts also believe those who lose weight find that their psoriasis medications tend to work better, requiring lower dosages and consequently they will experience fewer side effects.

Psoriasis Exercise Has Its Challenges

I've discovered over the years after seeing many psoriasis patients in my clinic that many are embarrassed and ashamed of their patches of red, itchy and flaky skin. And even know many who have psoriasis understand the benefits of exercise, most will not want to go out and bare their arms or legs at the local gym or swimming pool, and this is totally understandable. Playing tennis or a social game of golf may turn a lot of psoriasis sufferers right off.

To avoid people staring, many with psoriasis simply won't go out much in the warmer weather or bare their skin. You can see the problems that this will eventually bring, not wanting to go out and exercise and feeling socially isolated make it a lot easier for a person gain weight. If you combine these kinds of behavior along with overeating or over drinking, you have a sure fire recipe for weight gain and obesity.

Psoriasis patients need to be mindful of the kinds of skin and joint aggravations that may occur with exercise. Friction and sweating in areas like the abdominal folds, armpits, breast or groin areas can worsen psoriasis, and anything that places excess stress on the skin may trigger a skin flare up within a week or two.

Those with psoriatic arthritis need to be mindful that exercise can place a lot of additional stress on their joints as well, causing joint pain ranging from mild to quite severe.

Tips To Prevent Psoriasis Flare-Ups When Exercising

The first thing you will want to do is to prevent trauma to your skin by excess rubbing or friction.

- Be careful not to use water that is too hot, and no excess rubbing and scrubbing that may aggravate your skin.
- Wear loose exercise clothing to prevent constriction and areas of friction.
- Lubricate areas before you exercise, such as the groin, under the breasts or between the thighs to prevent chaffing. I'd recommend a little Jojoba oil, and not to use those petroleum (crude oil derivative) products.
- Consider training in the comfort of your own home if you have any skin flare ups, and be sure to venture outdoors when you feel OK about exercising around other people.

The 8 Best Exercise Tips For Those With Psoriasis

I have found that those who exercise quite vigorously every day may be doing themselves a disservice and even possibly be aggravating their psoriasis because of how much stress they place on their metabolism, skin and their digestive system. This is not something I have read anywhere else; it is a personal observation I have made in my clinic after working with many athletes and patients who exercise a lot that have psoriasis.

Exercise heats up the body, and it is important for you to not only understand that and kind of skin lesions or infections are aggravated or exacerbated by exercise due to the increased moisture caused by perspiration, I believe that any psoriasis can possibly be aggravated by any exercise that is too vigorous or too excessive.

1. Those with chronic psoriasis need to take extra care and shower immediately after any exercise and wear cotton undergarments.
2. Cool the body down gradually after you exercise by having a tepid then cool shower. This will prevent your body from maintaining a slightly higher than normal peripheral temperature which can aggravate a yeast infection, an increase in digestive problems and disturbed sleep.
3. Avoid having a sauna if you have a chronic yeast infection, it will heat your body core up too much, I've found that saunas frequently aggravate those with chronic yeast infections and some just feel worse and may even experience headaches, dizziness and many different types of skin and digestive flare-ups.
4. Those with athlete's foot need to dry their feet carefully in particular after showering and wear sandals preferably until the feet are completely dry. Buy a few pairs of top quality running shoes and be sure to rotate them, place a few drops in the toe and heel area once per week, this will help to completely eradicate athlete's foot and toe nail fungus in time. Be patient! Apply a little tea tree oil to the nails and feet after drying them.
5. Guys with jock itch should also shower immediately after any exercise, dry themselves carefully and thoroughly and wear 100% cotton undergarments only.

6. Don't use antiperspirants! You don't want to block the flow of perspiration, and if you want to mask any body odor then use an organic product like Aubrey Organics or the brand called Jason.
7. Be especially of not falling into the trap of carbohydrate replenishing drinks if your cycle or run. Many people drink energy drinks, soda drinks or those fancy sports drinks that contain a high amount of refined carbohydrates. And I'm sorry, but you won't "burn it off" because you are exercising!
8. Keep yourself well hydrated. It is important to drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise. Water improves most all aspects of your digestive system and allows the body to fight a yeast infection all by itself generally.

Yoga

The mind is everything. What you think, you become. *Buddha*



The word Yoga comes from Sanskrit that means, "to join" or "to yoke". Before I explain about yoga, let's get one thing clear; yoga is not a religion or a belief system, it is an ancient art form is based on harmonizing and developing the body, mind and spirit.

There are many different types of yoga, and I recommend that you contact a yoga teacher to find out which type best suits your needs. Some kinds of yoga are more meditative, others have been designed to help you more with flexibility and strength, and yet others have been designed to detoxify and cleanse the body. Some people who practice yoga are involved in one or even several kinds of yoga for this reason.

Pranayama for example, is a higher branch of Hatha Yoga and the main purpose of this form of yoga is to help with breath control. Using specialized techniques, those who practice pranayama have learned to strengthen and develop their parasympathetic nervous system to a very high degree, which in turn has an amazing effect at reducing your stress levels.

I've noticed with many patients including those with psoriasis I have known over the years that when they practice yoga for any length of time they develop a sense of inner peace, tranquility and wellbeing. Yoga can make you feel more in harmony you're your environment and over time aids in self-development and self-realization.

When yoga is regularly performed, it helps to make your body stronger and more flexible and it certainly has been linked with improving your circulatory, respiratory, immune, digestive, nervous and hormonal systems. Like Tai Chi, yoga brings about a sense of emotional stability and clarity of the mind.

Physically I am very much in favor of yoga, it is a particularly good activity for those who want to remain active as they grow older because by regularly tuning up your body in this way you will become a lot less prone to injuries such as

falls, strains and various other accidents as you age. I have an eighty-two year old patient who is remarkably flexible and young for her age after having practiced yoga for over twenty years, she came to yoga when she turned sixty! She said that yoga helped her with balance in her life after her husband had passed away and she needed to put her mind and body into something.

Emotionally, yoga serves a purpose as well, those who practice yoga several times each week just feel happier and more relaxed; less easily wound-up, less given to worry and are much more optimistically inclined. Yoga is great for those with psoriasis.

When searching the internet, I discovered that there are many journal reports that provide information on how yoga can have a most positive effect on psoriasis, especially psoriatic arthritis. According to the Indian Journal of Dermatology, stress can have a most negative affect on the normal functioning of the melanocytes and the keratinocytes in the skin. Indian research suggests that the regular practice of yoga can even cure psoriasis, and places emphasis on different yoga exercises (asanas), deep breathing exercises, as well as meditation techniques.

And as I have mentioned previously, stress has a tendency to impair immune system activity by weakening the adrenal gland function, the very glands that help you recover from any kind of stressful event. Practicing yoga, especially under the guidance of an experienced yoga instructor, has been proven to effectively reduce the impact of stress on the body, and this then can reduce the chances of any future psoriasis aggravations as well.

Use It Or Lose It

Maybe you are a baby-boomer like me and pushing fifty or more years, it is important to remember that old age and associated illnesses that come with it are big business today. Not everybody is sufficiently encouraged to look after him or herself, because quite frankly, folks are worth more money to the sickness industry when they are unwell. While it is true that people are living longer, the quality of life for many of our elderly citizens is far from acceptable.

It is rare today to find a person who is seventy or eighty and who is not on some form of pharmaceutical medication, and the bulk of older people are taking up to a half a dozen drugs or more. Use it or lose it, yoga has the ability to give you a quality of life that many only dream of as they age. So what are you waiting for!

Tai Chi



Tai Chi is different from Yoga, in that it originated in China, whereas Yoga originally came from India. Tai chi is a Chinese system of slow meditative physical exercises designed for relaxing the body as well as balance and health in general. I like to call Tai Chi "meditation in motion", as it is like a moving form of yoga and meditation combined together, and would like to

stress that Tai Chi is certainly not an “old person exercise” as some may think!

Tai Chi consists of a number of various *forms* (also called sets) that consist of a particular sequence of movements. These slow deliberate movements originally came from the movements of animals and birds, and later from martial arts. The movements are always performed slowly and gracefully with transitions between them.

Just like Yoga, there are different forms of Tai Chi, and most will want to do the meditative exercises for the mind and body. Others may be more interested in the combat aspects of some Tai Chi styles that are considered a martial art in their own right, just like Tae Kwon Do or Kung Fu.

Tai Chi is a traditional conditioning exercise in the Chinese community, and recently it has become much more popular in the Western societies.

The exercise intensity is low to moderate, depending on the training style, posture and duration. Participants can choose to perform a complete set of Tai Chi movements or selected movements according to their needs, and it is even perfect for anybody with a heart or circulatory problem.

Research substantiates that Tai Chi enhances aerobic capacity, muscular strength, blood vessel function and psychological wellbeing. In addition, Tai Chi reduces some cardiovascular risk factors, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Recent studies have even discovered that Tai Chi is safe and effective even for patients with heart disease, coronary bypass surgery and heart failure. I believe that this is one of the best exercises for those with burnout or who suffer from stress, as many of the movements are gentle and do not require much effort.

Chinese medicine and philosophy embrace the concept that “chi” is the vital force that animates and drives the body, and one of the main aims of Tai Chi is to enhance the health and vitality of a person by encouraging the circulation of chi.

The secondary aim of Tai Chi is to foster a tranquil and calm mind due to the slow and graceful yet precise execution of the movements. When a person learns to complete the sets and then master the movements, they learn important lessons in balance, alignment, and rhythm of their body’s movements along with very finely tuned motor control of their individual muscles.

I’ve noticed that patients who practice Tai Chi daily have superior control over their posture including standing, walking and moving in general than folks who do not practice this ancient form of exercise. After practicing Tai Chi for a few years, you will almost certainly discover that there will be major benefits in terms of correcting your posture, alignment and many movements patterns which if faulty can often lead to tension or injury.

Tai Chi is a discipline I recommend in particular for those who have adrenal or thyroid issues, as it is calming, very relaxing and seems to have a nervous system rejuvenating power about it. I once recommended a patient many years ago with graves disease (hyperthyroidism) to begin Tai Chi, and the difference it made after several months completely amazed me.

I can highly recommend Tai Chi and have found it to be most beneficial for many different types of conditions, including people with psoriasis. It is ideal to practice Tai Chi once or twice per day for fifteen-minute sessions.

Mold, Your Environment And Psoriasis



An investigation in 2005 revealed that New Zealand's growing leaky building problem was causing a large increase in dangerous mold in damp homes. Asbestos awareness started off very slowly yet nobody really took the adverse health related links seriously until many non-smokers associated with this industry started to develop serious lung problems like cancer and

mesothelioma. The US government and asbestos industry have both been criticized for not acting quickly enough to inform the public of dangers, and to reduce public exposure. In the late 1970s, leaked court documents proved that asbestos industry officials knew plenty of asbestos dangers since the 1930s and yet concealed them from the public.

Leaky Buildings Cause Mold

Do we really know enough about potential the dangers of mold and how many people are still living in leaky and moldy environments? The mold problem is caused by dampness that allows certain toxic varieties of mold to grow in buildings, and many countries have homes that are exposed to molds and damp conditions for many months of the year. Modern building companies utilizing the latest building materials like to make buildings watertight, and this often comes at the expense of poor ventilation and air flow as homes today are extensively insulated against the cold and wet. Many plastics and styrene have been used in housing construction which can potentially breed mold, and this coupled with defective construction, as many homes since the 1970's were built with sloppy compliance codes, can make mold lead to serious health problems. The building code has been since upgraded significantly since 2005, but we are still left with the legacy of many leaky and defective buildings that are potentially a health trap.

There are many fungi which have been recognized as being quite harmful to human health including stachybotrys, which is becoming much more common. Molds feed on moisture and organic materials like carpet, wood and wallpaper and can even eat into plaster and brickwork that then have to be replaced. The popular warehouse conversions in many major cities are particularly susceptible to stachybotrys because these are quite old buildings that have never before been heated or thoroughly treated to remove any molds prior to the new construction. Such older buildings have often been hastily converted to flats or units with partitions put in, and limited ventilation and airflow creates the ideal breeding conditions for the trapped mold. In addition, the sudden heating tends to draw moisture out of the building's structure and into the inner environment.

How Does Mold Affect Your Health And Your Psoriasis?

Many of us are exposed to mold spores every day, usually by touching or

breathing them in. Because molds naturally exist outdoors as well as indoors, living in a totally mold-free environment is near impossible. You even eat foods containing plenty of the stuff like cheeses, breads, leftover foods and mushrooms that are moldy foods themselves.

As molds grow, they release microscopic spores that can then travel through the air where they can be easily inhaled. People who inhale large numbers of spores may get quite sick indeed, especially those who are more susceptible like the immune-compromised or those who are immune-suppressed from drug treatment (e.g. Prednisolone) or on recurring antibiotics for complaints like acne, those with psoriasis, those with allergies and the elderly especially.

Such infections can also affect the skin, eyes, lungs or other organs. These are considered "opportunistic" infections that usually do not affect strong and healthy people. Once again, it's all about your susceptibility and your level of resistance.

You May Have Psoriasis And Not A Mold Allergy

I have found a connection between psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis aggravations (severe in some cases) when the person was living a house infested with mold, in fact, mold has been determined by some health experts as a possible underlying cause of some auto immune diseases. This is where careful case taking will uncover the real underlying cause of psoriasis.

The signs and symptoms of psoriasis can be particularly aggravated by living in such damp environments, and in addition I've noticed over the years how several psoriasis patients have told me how much better they felt when on holidays or when they lived at a friend's place (such as house-sitting) even for just a few days. Not a co-incidence I believe, they just shifted to living where there was a lot less mold spore floating around and they felt better. Their immune system was not challenged and consequently their symptoms eased right off, yet their diet and lifestyle remained virtually unchanged. They were still eating bread and drinking wine but felt fine. In this case it will probably be an allergy or sensitivity to mold, note the patient was still on the same diet yet the symptoms eased right off.

But does the person crave sugars, chocolate, alcohol and sweets in general and suffer badly in moldy, damp or smoke filled environment? Then this person needs to be checked carefully for a yeast infection, a very real possibility, but in my experience many of those who have a mold sensitivity or allergy may well have a rampant yeast infection. And I've spoken on numerous occasions about the link between candida yeast infections and psoriasis, something I see almost daily in my naturopathic practice.

Confused yet? With experience you soon get to understand the difference, believe me.

The hidden threat of health concerns surrounding mold are an important reason to prevent mold growth and to clean up molds, especially in our indoor environments. Have you noticed those anti-mold advertisements on the TV at

night? You can bet that if it is on the flat screen it will be a big problem because they wouldn't waste their marketing dollars otherwise. These advertisements seem to target your bathroom and kitchen and make you feel that only this area is affected by mold, try looking very closely in your bedroom, you may be quite surprised.

Bathrooms and kitchens are the two major areas that are potentially affected by mold. Did you know that mold could often be found growing in the kitchen? It's because there's lots of moisture in the kitchen like from water from running your tap or steam from your kettle or the stove.

Mold Is Very Common In Your Kitchen

Your kitchen is a hot spot for mold; here are a few of the key areas affected and what to do about them. You spend a great deal of time in your kitchen.

The Fridge

Food that's left in the fridge for a long time frequently ends up with mold on it, did you know? When you have psoriasis, eating ANY foods either covered in mold or containing mold is a bad idea if you are seriously trying to recover. Areas you will want to check out frequently are the bottom of the fridge, because foods near the bottom are often out of sight and forgotten about and naturally this is where any mold will thrive. The second reason mold is especially common at the bottom of the fridge is that it is not as cold here and water often ends up gravitating here as well.

Did you read section the Psoriasis Diet book yet? In this book I've mentioned that it is best to avoid all left-over foods and to throw out that collection of jars from your refrigerator when you commence treatment for your psoriasis in earnest because they are perfect little mold factories and if you have psoriasis the last thing you want to do is to unknowingly breed and consume even more mold spores that can affect your immune system in a negative way.

Make sure you regularly (every week) clean out your refrigerator to get rid of any mold residues, and good advice for you is to replace any fridge over five years old with a brand new one if you have a severe psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis. It's like moving to another home and you might be quite surprised at the difference this can make. Carefully check for any traces of any old foods left in your fridge like rotting fruit and vegetables. And did I mention the drip tray; it can often end up with mold spores as well, keep an eye on it and clean it regularly.

Mold on Dishes

If you have psoriasis I'd prefer you use the dishwasher and not to wash your plates, cups and cutlery by hand. Mold can more easily grow this way than when using a dishwasher, which tends to typically wash at a higher temperature than you can manually and rinses better too. Don't leave plates and bowls piling up and do wash every single day, rinse dishes as soon as they are used and stack them at once in your dishwasher. All common sense isn't it?

Mold in the Garbage Bin and Compost Bin

Your garbage and compost bins are probably the most frequently overlooked areas that can potentially contain amazing amounts of mold in your kitchen.

All those food scraps and wet waste can begin grow molds in less than two days, so make sure you empty your rubbish bin every single day. If you are a chronic psoriasis patient I'd recommend that you take the compostable material outside every day, throw out the compost bin from the kitchen! It is a hotbed for mold and unless you wash it out every single day (who does?) it can potentially give you a nice big dose of mold spores every time you open it.

The Cutting Board

Do you have a wooden cutting board or wooden chopping block you cut fruits, vegetables and meat on? I place my cutting boards in the dishwasher.

I recommend that you rinse your cutting boards well with boiling water and give them a very good scrub. Placing them in the full sun will also help to kill mold spores. Consider non-wooden cutting boards, there is less chance of any mold contamination because you can clean and rinse these surfaces more thoroughly than you can with wood.

And while you are there in the kitchen, take the bread bin away until you recover from your psoriasis, you really shouldn't be eating any breads made with yeast, sugars and all those preservatives until you get well, make sure you read the Psoriasis Diet because it explains all this in great detail.

Molds Contains Spores That Circulate In The Air

According to Dr. Leo Galland, an American health expert, molds contain *bio-aerosols* that consist of microscopic living fungi and/or bacteria that can circulate freely in the air. Legionnaire's disease is one such well-known example and this disease has killed many susceptible folk over the years. An adverse reaction to mold depends largely on how much a person is exposed to, the age of the person and the person's sensitivities or allergies. The same amount of mold may cause health effects in one person, but not in another. Some mold experts like Dr. Galland believe that mold may be responsible for many hidden health problems not necessarily linked to the sick building syndrome.

A study in Scotland where mold and mildew are abundant, just like New Zealand, found that those who lived in housing that was judged to be damp or showed visible signs of mildew, (particularly in the sleeping quarters) had far greater rates of sickness than those who lived in drier environments. These differences were independent of smoking, occupation or income. It is a known fact that damp homes breed both mold and dust mites more easily and indoor levels of molds can reach concentrations that are tens of thousands greater than those outside.

Symptoms Of Mold Exposure

Exposure to mold can cause a variety of symptoms, and as you will see below, a lot of these signs and symptoms also belong to those with psoriasis. Sensitive people who have touched or inhaled mold or mold spores may have allergic reactions such as:

1. Blocked nose
2. Cold or flu like symptoms
3. Coughing
4. Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
5. Hay fever like symptoms
6. Hair loss
7. Itchy nose
8. Itchy eyes
9. Itchy ears
10. Irritated or itchy skin
11. Irritated or itchy throat
12. Nasal congestion
13. Red, bloodshot eyes
14. Runny nose
15. Sore throat
16. Sinus congestion
17. Sinus headaches
18. Skin rash, hives
19. Sneezing
20. Watery eyes
21. Wheezing

Molds can even trigger asthma attacks in people who are allergic, causing wheezing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. And when is mold at its peak? In the wet of winter, when it is rainy and damp, the same time people come down with respiratory infections, funny that. Have you gone to your bedroom yet and checked the corners and looked at the ceiling, the window sills? Do you see any silvery or dark patches in the corner of the ceiling? Check the carpets and ceiling too, especially near any windows.

What Mold Tests Are Available And What Do I Do?

I personally wouldn't waste any of my money on testing for mold allergies. Blood or skin testing called the RAST test can be done to show if you are allergic to a substance. The RAST test detects levels of antibodies to particular allergens and the results are highly variable indeed. Ok, so you are allergic to molds and dust mites. Big deal, what do you do now, sell your house and go live in Arizona? If you have symptoms year-round, and not just in winter or when your house is at its dampest, my first recommendation is to try to rid yourself of your psoriasis and improve your immune health in general. As I routinely say in the Psoriasis Program, if you increase your resistance, your susceptibility drops. With a powerful immune system and an awareness of mold coupled with a reduction of mold in your indoor environment (if you have a problem), you should be able to significantly improve your resistance to those floating spores. If your house is particularly bad, then move out. By the way, have you checked

your house out for any traces of old and cleaned up that mold on your bathroom ceiling, in your bedroom or kitchen yet?

What to do When All Else Fails

"Mastering others reveals strength. Mastering yourself reveals true power." — *Lao Tzu*

Why Many With Psoriasis Fail to Get Permanent Results



For most people with psoriasis, effective treatment is simply a matter of following the Psoriasis Program, eating the right foods, adopting the right lifestyle and taking the right dietary supplements. Many will finish their treatment and achieve the desired result.

Unfortunately not all endings are happy, and all too many will find a returning of their old symptoms, and this is mainly the case because they have gone back to their old ways of eating and living. If you keep on doing what you have always done, there is that inherent danger of "getting what you always got" back. Common sense, isn't it? But not to many people I have seen with chronic and recurring psoriasis it seems. Some will come in for treatment only when they have those uncomfortable symptoms, and as soon as these subside they slowly go back to their own ways. Others will learn and maintain healthy dietary and lifestyle changes for many years and rarely get a repeat of their annoying symptoms. It all depends on a person's ability to discipline themselves I guess.

Some people with psoriasis will need longer periods of treatment and some will need stronger treatments. It is hard to accurately predict and monitor the type and amount of supplements an individual will be able to tolerate. Some will have treatment aggravations and yet others may even have very strong aggravations, making treatment uncomfortable and even agonizing for the very sensitive patient. One of the smartest things you can do is to simply stay on track, work through a few difficult spots during the early phase of treatment and to especially stay on track as you notice the improvements, the more you improve, the more likely the temptation will be to stray and go off track. This is the danger zone, and I have explained this in greater detail in my Introduction To The Psoriasis Program booklet. Be sure to read "How People Actually Get Well"

What To Do If You Aggravate



I have found that their practitioners do not tell most psoriasis patients that when bacteria and yeasts are killed off in their digestive system that they may release cell wall fractions and various chemicals into the bloodstream and digestive tract. In some cases, this can weaken the immune system considerably and make the person feel very washed-out and "wasted" and is a prime reason for

the “side-effects” of psoriasis treatment some experience. If you follow the Psoriasis Program carefully, your chances of aggravating violently will be very slim indeed, especially if you follow all of my suggestions carefully.

Many psoriasis patients are used to using various lotions, creams or steroidal treatments over the years and some will get a higher degree of relief than others from these kinds of treatments. Natural treatments can offer relief, but are more targeted to address the actual causes of the skin lesions, a poor digestion and immune system. Once you improve your diet you may well find that your body will begin to detoxify and throw off different kinds of toxins and poisons that have accumulated over the years, this will occur due to an accumulation of the many toxins and chemicals you have come into contact (and stored in the tissues of your body) over the years. With the psoriasis patient, such accumulated toxins are often as a result of any pharmaceutical preparations such as creams lotions, ointments as well as drugs. Some psoriasis patients can have the tendency to such aggravations as a “worsening” of their psoriatic condition, when in fact these aggravations are as a result of the cleansing that occurs from a positive change of diet and lifestyle. Unfortunately, in some cases, I have seen patients abandon natural treatment at this stage and go back to those suppressive drug treatments.

A good way to side-step those annoying aggravations, particularly if you *know* you are a sensitive person, is to go easy at the beginning of the Psoriasis Program, and to take your time. You have probably lived with psoriasis for a considerable period of time and a few extra weeks or months of treatment isn’t going to make that much difference.

So if you know you are very sensitive, once you start taking any dietary supplements when you have psoriasis, start with the minutest amount of supplements, and to *very slowly* build up the dosages until the slightest side-effects are noticeable. You may notice a slight discomfort and will potentially avoid any strong reactions that can leave you feeling terrible for a week or more, being barely able to function. Always remember, an increase in uncomfortable symptoms upon commencement of treatment is not a bad sign, it is a positive sign and means progress. You will find the gradually the symptoms decrease and that the treatment can be stepped up.

A further way for you to avoid aggravations is not to begin a new hobby or sport when you undergo psoriasis treatment. It is not wise to go bungee jumping, skydiving, scuba diving, long-distance running or engage in a triathlon, etc. Your body is under a considerable stress when you undergo the Psoriasis Program, your immune system will be challenged and this extra stress can only serve to lower your resistance even further an increase the chance of an aggravation. Wait until you have fully recovered before you attempt a strenuous form of any activity, this is something I highly recommend.

Withdrawal Symptoms

Sometimes your aggravation symptoms are not as a direct result of detoxification or due to the treatment itself, but come because of a withdrawal

you are experiencing from coffee, tea, alcohol, chocolate, dairy products, sugar, wheat, corn, or some other food or beverage itself.

The withdrawal aggravation is most commonly due to caffeine, so be sure to slowly step this down during your Big Clean-Up, or better still, before you have a cleanse and well before you start on the MEVY Diet. Once again, please read my book entitled the Psoriasis Diet to understand more.

The withdrawal can also be due to taking an allergy prone food out of your diet, which occurs in the second stage of the Psoriasis Diet. So if you think about it, with a bit of thought you will be able to know what it was, the caffeine or the allergy food. Did the aggravation come about not long after you stopped that coffee or chocolate, or did it occur after you went onto the low-allergy diet?

Your Greatest Weapon - Yourself

I can confidently tell you, after having treated many people with psoriasis, that the greatest weapons at your disposal are your diet, your lifestyle, the supplements but first and foremost they are patience, self-discipline, determination and the ability to stick with the Psoriasis Program until you get the desired results. You may even become incredibly frustrated at different times, and maybe a little difficult to live with as you experience periodic setbacks, but I'd like to remind you that the vast majority of psoriasis sufferers commonly experiences setbacks.

There is NO such thing as a "12 Hour Psoriasis Cure" when it comes to psoriasis, especially chronic psoriasis, so please be aware that you will have to work at it but know that in the end you will have reached your ultimate goal, a complete resolution of all your psoriasis symptoms.

14 Potential Treatment Aggravations And What To Do

Here are some handy hints and tips on what to do if you experience any of the following aggravations that may occur during the Psoriasis Program, especially if you have had a chronic psoriasis for many years.

1 - Bloating and Gas. If you have gone through the Psoriasis Program, you will have read plenty of information about dysbiosis (bowel bacterial or yeast overgrowth), leaky gut syndrome, food allergies, constipation, and the many other digestive issues commonly affecting those with psoriasis. Bloating and gas are especially common, because of an overgrowth of bacteria and/or candida yeast species inside your digestive tract, and these unwanted companions like to eat sugars and produce gas as a result, what we call "fermentation dysbiosis". Some people may experience a complete disappearance of these complaints that they may have experienced on/off for years, whereas others will begin to get them when they commence treatment.

The potential food allergies many have and leaky gut syndrome will only add to their digestive discomfort, so be aware that your level of bloating and gas may go up and down during the treatment. Make sure you do the Big Clean Up before you start on the Psoriasis Program, it can potentially help you a lot by

flushing out a lot of the bad bugs and yeasts from your system before you even begin.

Garlic is one of your best friends when it comes to bloating and gas, and so is a top quality antifungal and antibacterial dietary supplement. And make sure you take it and the probiotics religiously, you should notice a significant reduction with bloating and gas if you do. Stick with my diet recommendations and be sure to look at your stress levels, as stress can affect your digestive system quite a lot. You will be able to read a lot more about the diet and stress in the appropriate sections in the Psoriasis Program.

2 - Indigestion. This is very much like the bloating and gas, and both of these digestive complaints can be as a consequence of indigestion. Be sure to take the Digestive Enzymes before or during each meal, eat smaller portion sizes and be sure to chew your foods well. Have you checked the combinations of food you are eating? Eat steamed vegetables and white (chicken and fish) proteins for a few days; this should get your digestion back on track. Keep an eye on your stress levels; stress has this way of affecting the stomach of many anxious people in particular. Slow down when you eat, and be especially careful to chew your foods well.

3 - Weight loss. People don't normally gain weight on the Psoriasis Program; in fact I've found that they are much more inclined to lose it. I like people to keep on eating grains and legumes, as these will ensure that not too much weight is lost. Eat smaller meals more frequently, and be sure to eat plenty of protein as well. Have plenty of rest periods and don't do too much, anyone who expends lots of calories and cuts their diet back will be significantly more prone to losing weight. Those who worry excessively or who can't relax will find it harder to gain as well, be sure to read the lifestyle hints and tips in my psoriasis books.

4 - Constipation. This bowel complaint may occur at any time during your treatment, and one of the main reasons it may occur is because you are changing your diet and the bowel flora become altered as a consequence. If you commence the Psoriasis Program with a history of constipation, I'd like you to start eating sensibly from now on and not to revert back to what you were eating previously, and especially take a look at your lifestyle habits, because poor habits here are often at the root cause of chronic constipation.

- Eat smaller, more frequent meals and avoid overeating at one sitting.
- Take time to eat, breathe slowly and chew food thoroughly.
- Are you still eating your dinner on your lap in front of the evening news? Try eating at the dinner table.
- Reduce but preferably stop your caffeine intake, caffeine is implicated in constipation and diarrhea, it dehydrates the body.

Foods that lubricate the intestines. Eat foods like beet, okra (gumbo), kiwi fruit, seaweed, spinach, sesame seed, sesame oil, walnut, pine nut, almond, alfalfa sprouts, carrot and cauliflower.

Foods that promote bowel motions. Eat foods that help move stool through the intestines-cabbage, papaya, peas, sesame seeds, coconut, asparagus, and kiwi fruit.

Herbs & foods that soothe the intestines. Eat foods like– marshmallow root, flax seeds, fenugreek seeds, psyllium seeds, licorice root, and slippery elm bark

Beneficial bacteria enhancing foods. Eat foods like miso, sauerkraut, yoghurt, Kim chi, kefir and quark

Decrease intake of saturated (animal) fats. Eat foods with an increased level of essential fatty acids (cold-water fish, nuts, and seeds). Take the Omega 3 fatty acid supplement twice daily

Eat more fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Did you know that a 2010 survey found that 17% of British people never eat fresh fruits or vegetables? Follow the MEVY Diet, and make sure you eat plenty of greens, they help the bowel function and you will discover that your bowels will improve significantly within weeks.

Drink more water. Do you really drink water frequently throughout the day? Warm lemon water taken before meals stimulates digestion. Try the juice of ½ a lemon in water in the morning before breakfast. REMEMBER to drink plenty of liquids. You need more fluid particularly when you have more fiber for fiber to work effectively.

Flaxseed meal. Otherwise known as linseed. Have 1 heaping tsp. in 8 oz. of apple juice, provides fiber and soothes the digestive tract. Follow with an additional 8 oz. of water. Linseed/Sunflower/Almond mix is excellent too. Slippery elm bark powder is good, but can be a bit pricey.

Colonic hydrotherapy. I have helped to solve very tricky cases of constipation with recommending a course of colonics plus other complementary and alternative methods of healing. Consider visiting a professional colon therapist if you have a history of bowel problems.

Liver and bowel detox. Have you read the book called Psoriasis Cleansing And Detox? This booklet will give you all the information you need with regard to cleansing and detox when you have psoriasis. If you have been constipated for some time, get that bowel working first then consider the Liver & Gallbladder Flush, you will find this information in the book entitled Psoriasis, Internal Cleansing And Detox.

5 - Diarrhea. Diarrhea does occur with psoriasis, and when it does I generally suspect parasites and bad bacterial levels, especially if there is any sensation of pain or discomfort around the belly button or to one side lower down the abdomen. Make sure you eat the raw garlic (during a meal) every day and take the Antifungal and Antibacterial Formula three to four times daily. Yogurt may help a lot here, and also the fermented and cultured foods, so be sure to read all this information in the Psoriasis Diet book. Be sure to take the probiotics three times daily. Slippery elm bark is good and so is ground linseed.

6 - Nausea. Although nausea does occur, I rarely witness this with patients who undergo the Psoriasis Program. Sometimes parasites can cause nausea, particularly when they are killed during treatment. Grapefruit seed extract (GSE) can cause nausea in a very few, but this will only occur if you take too

much, so just reduce the dose if you experience any discomfort. Sometimes taking a (yeast free) B Complex vitamin can help with nausea, especially B6. Ginger tea can help significantly, so can chewing on a thin slice of fresh ginger. Be sure to take Digestive Enzymes a few times during the day before meals, they will help a lot and so with the Probiotics.

A few psoriasis patients I have seen occasionally seen become more sensitive to smells during treatment, or have become very sensitive to odors or fumes due to their increased allergic response and immune dysfunction; a good idea here is to burn some essential oil, I have found spike lavender to be effective here. Keep your meals to small portion sizes, another good tip.

7 - Blood Sugar Problems and Sugar Cravings. Whenever you make diet changes or are prone to stress you could develop hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar). Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar are irritability, weakness, tiredness, headaches, sweet cravings, and shakiness if meals are delayed. Make sure you eat small meals more frequently, eat plenty of protein and avoid a carbohydrate rich diet especially. Blood sugar issues generally resolve themselves after you have worked out the right and wrong foods to eat. After you have been on the Psoriasis Program for a month or two you will have worked out what foods suit you best, and what you should avoid. For stubborn low blood sugar or excessive sweet cravings, take 500 mcg of Chromium picolinate before meals. For seriously heavy-duty sweet cravings, take some of the herb called Gymnema, read more about this in The Psoriasis Diet book.

8 - Mucus. I've had some patients complain of increasing phlegm and mucus during treatment, once again, this will be cause by the change of diet and flora (bacteria) of their digestive system. I suspect it also has something to do with a slight change in the body's pH and digestive enzymatic levels. Be sure to get rid of the mucus-forming foods out of your diet (especially dairy products, any sugar containing foods, etc.), and take a more alkaline approach to your eating, see The Psoriasis Diet book for the list of the acid and alkaline forming foods. A top quality Digestive Enzyme formula can help considerably here, and so will lemon juice and garlic. I've found that psoriasis patients who experience phlegm tend to improve when they supplement with pancreatic enzymes in particular.

9 - Fatigue And A Low Mood. You may not experience much fatigue or mood changes, but for the majority of patients I have seen this will not be the case. Do expect to feel tired during the different stages of treatment and be sure to allow extra rest and sleep, your body and especially your immune system will appreciate it and you will recover that much sooner. This is certainly not a good time to go to Peru for a two-week power holiday to see Machu Picchu, as one of my psoriasis patients did a few years ago, much to her disappointment. But it is a good time to go to a health resort and be pampered.

You may not be particularly pleasant to be around during the first two to three weeks of the MEVY Diet, bearing that in mind it may not be the best time to go to a wedding. You may be able to plan some events in your life, and if you can plan to undergo the first month of treatment away from any important upcoming social or work-related events, it will be a good decision you have made. Therefore, try to schedule the initial part of your Psoriasis Program away

from weddings, vacations or important social gatherings. Explain to the person closest to you that you are going to commence the Psoriasis Program and that you may experience fatigue, low moods or an increase in some of your symptoms.

Good advice I can give to the chronic female psoriasis patient is to be extra kind to yourself, consider that you have a chronic health problem and to pretend you are several months pregnant. You wouldn't do anything too strenuous if you were pregnant would you? You would avoid alcohol, late nights and doing too much in general, you would be more inclined to rest up with a magazine. The "psoriasis pregnancy" doesn't have to last 9 months though, but the kinder you are to yourself the quicker you are likely to recover fully. Give yourself permission to ease off a little and take it easy, especially on those days when you feel just drained, washed-out or your skin looks or feels terrible. For guys I usually tell them to rest up, and treat themselves as if they are recovering from an extensive operation or a major sporting event.

10 - Anger, Depression and Crying. Feeling lousy and even feeling angry are common emotional responses for some who are chronically unwell with psoriasis. They are normal bodily responses to healing; so be aware that your tolerance levels may be lower than they normally are and your fuse may be a little short, especially if you have teenagers or a similar reason to get irritated. Don't feel ashamed of having a cry, it is a good emotional release as you will almost certainly be feeling more sensitive than usual, especially during the early stages of psoriasis treatment. Talking to a trusted friend about how you feel is a good idea too. Make sure you have plenty of rest and do speak with your doctor or a counsellor if you feel sad, anxious or angry frequently.

Chronic psoriasis can make you feel really lousy at the best of times, although I have not experienced psoriasis myself, I know how many of my psoriasis patients feel when they are having a bad time with their condition. Some psoriasis sufferers feel quite depressed when those around them think they are just imagining how bad they feel, and are just "seeking attention". St John's Wort may be a good choice for those who get the blues, but do talk to your health-care professional before you take things for emotional expressions like anger and depression. B Vitamins, Calcium/Magnesium and Vitamin C are helpful as well.

11 - Headaches. A headache is a warning sign that something is not quite right inside your body. Is it because you stopped coffee or are going through the detox phase? The patients who get the fiercest headaches are the ones who went cold turkey on 5 cups of coffee a day. I see them regularly; believe me, what a nasty headache you can get from a caffeine withdrawal! Are you eating enough food and drinking enough water?

Blood sugar problems occur easily, your brain especially needs that glucose (blood sugar) to keep it mentally focused and a lack of food, skipping meals or eating at weird times can all help to stimulate one of those nice dull background headaches.

Are you resting enough or doing too much? Those who don't relax and stress out, especially those who worry, tend to get sore and tight muscles of face, neck and upper back. It has been estimated that over three-quarters of all

headaches are caused by tense muscles, and a tension headache is also one of the most common reasons why a person would take a pain killer. Do you stress out and are you working on reducing your stress load? Maybe you have been exposed to toxic fumes or a toxic (mold) environment? Often times, those who begin the Psoriasis Program may well experience a headache in the first few weeks, and it will be probably due to a release of toxins that were stored away in the body. These kinds of headaches tend to spontaneously disappear within two or three days.

Try a Vitamin B Complex, but also a Magnesium product, a mineral that can help to relax those tight and sore muscles.

12 - Insomnia. I have covered this common problem in great detail in the section, just go back and take a look. You will find "13 Ways To Beat Insomnia" quite useful.

13 - Skin Aggravations. Some people with psoriasis get bad breath when they go on a program, especially a detox program, others may get tired and develop painful and inflamed joints (psoriatic arthritis), brain fog, some get a sore throat of a cold, and then there are those who get those numerous skin aggravations. If toxins are not eliminated properly through the digestive tract of kidneys, the skin may become a dumping ground for all manner of toxins and you could find that your skin may develop pimples, an acne-like or dermatitis condition, that includes itchiness, redness or various kinds of swellings. Occasionally a person undergoing the Psoriasis Program may get a stye on their eyelid or a boil (one or many) somewhere on their torso. These are all signs of toxins leaving the body and should be encouraged and certainly not discouraged, so don't get upset and think that you have some new skin disease; it's just the body eliminating plenty of rubbish.

I have found that many people with psoriasis get a skin rash when they eliminate the potentially allergy forming foods from their diet, especially those who used to have eczema in the past. Try Vitamin C powder, 1 to 2 teaspoons per day. Aim for 3,000 milligrams a day in water in divided doses before meals. One of the best herbal medicines is Burdock (*Arctium lappa*), a good blood purifier when you have any skin condition. Golden seal is a good choice too; small amounts for two weeks should do the trick. Take the Probiotics twice daily before meals. Calendula cream is worth applying to these skin areas, and get some Tea Tree Oil soap for the bath. If the skin flares up considerably during treatment, then reduce the dosage of any supplements you are taking and increase your intake of water, vegetables and get plenty of rest.

14 - Colds, Coughs And Sore Throats. Those fighting psoriasis may be more susceptible to poor immunity, and is it any wonder? When your body is fighting psoriasis, when it probably has food allergies and a leaky gut, you will be more prone to coming down with a cold or cough. How can your immune system work under a load of yeast and bad bacteria? And then some take antibiotics as a consequence if they have even the slightest skin infection, is it any wonder their immune system becomes increasingly weaker?

Make sure you get ample rest and avoid getting excessively cold, exposed to drafts or being in moldy or damp places. Be sure to have a fresh clove of garlic

daily, take the Probiotics, the Omega 3 and have additional Vitamin C if your immune system is especially vulnerable. I recommend herbal medicines for a sore throat, and my favorite herbs here are Echinacea root, Golden seal, Myrrh and Poke root.

Trouble-Shooting - What To Do If You STILL Need Help

OK, so you have followed the Psoriasis Program faithfully, but you are still not satisfied with your recovery? It is as if something is holding you back from getting those permanent results you have been looking for. You have been following my recommendations for three or four months and you are having difficulties recovering from your psoriasis, where to now?

Try going through the following checklist using this list as a guide:

1. Re-examine your diet. Have you faithfully applied the diet principles I have outlined in The Psoriasis Diet book? Have you started to feel better and then included some of the foods that you eliminated earlier on, such as caffeine, alcohol, sugary or processed foods, or have you slipped back into your old ways of eating? Be honest with yourself!
2. Have you checked yourself out carefully for any potential food-allergies? You may need to do an IgE/IgG Elisa blood test to determine your allergy status. Have you eliminated all the foods you are allergic to, are addicted to or are sensitive to?
3. Have you incorporated the major lifestyle changes I have outlined? If not, make these changes right now. Read more in Psoriasis And Understanding the Lifestyle.
4. Do you have adrenal fatigue? You may wish to read Dr. James Wilson's book on Adrenal Fatigue, it may well be one of your biggest obstacles, and a major reason why you are failing to recover. Strong and healthy adrenal glands can beat psoriasis when all else fails, so be sure to read the section on adrenal fatigue in Psoriasis, Stress and Immunity.
5. You may like to re-examine your lifestyle, especially consider the balance of the demands on your mind and body that you are making. Have you completed the Holmes Stress Test yet? Are you taking enough time out from the hectic demands of your work or family life?
6. Re-examine your exercise program. Are you moving your body at least three times a week or are you chained to your computer?
7. How is your sleep? Do you have insomnia or difficulties getting to sleep or frequent early waking? You will never have a good immune system and finally beat psoriasis if you have a continual sleeping problem. Read the section on insomnia in this book.
8. Have you discontinued taking any unnecessary medications from the doctor? Can you stop the oral contraceptive pill, antibiotics or hormonal treatments? These can stop your progression and set your progress right back.
9. How is your environment? Have you cleaned up that moldy ceiling or bathroom? Are you still using chemicals or exposed to fumes, poisons or any chemicals in your occupation? You may want to seriously think about finding another job. A green keeper saw me with psoriasis and finally beat

his chronic skin rash once he got rid of his job and the chemicals that went along with it.

10. Are you taking the right dietary supplements and taking them regularly?

Why Do Only Some People Get Well And Stay Well?

When I wrote The Psoriasis Program, it struck me that it always appears to be that the patients who get well and *stay well* are those who adopt and maintain the more holistic ways of health-care, here are some of the major principles they adopt:

They do their homework. These are the people who tend to read & study various resources like health magazines and The Psoriasis Program to gain a better understanding of their health problems and in particular the actual root causes of their psoriasis. They attend health lectures and have friendships with people who are also into healthy lifestyles. They avoid pharmaceutical drugs for all their trivial ills and have become informed about the most effective ways of using natural medicines instead of drugs. If your friends all drink, smoke and are overweight, then there's a good chance you may too.

They assess and change their attitude if need be. As they become more enlightened, they become more positive and hopeful of their health and wellbeing and realize that health truly is in their hands. Instead of feeling that they are a "victim of their own circumstance", they begin to actively participate in their own recovery from psoriasis. They work out a plan of action with their practitioner and are committed and work hard to keep on track. They have learned that the glass is half full and not half empty.

They are committed to getting and staying well. I have always found that those who gain the best results from lifestyle and dietary programs are the ones who are the most committed and will do whatever it takes to stay on track in terms of their health. They pursue a healthy lifestyle and avoid anything not conducive to optimal health. They have learned to live with choices, not habits.

They understand the importance of optimal nutrition. Those who get well quickly from psoriasis are those who take their diet most seriously. They plan their shopping trips and meals and make the right choices when dining out. They have learned that food is medicine, and medicine is food. They avoid the obstacles like alcohol and sweet foods until they have fully recovered.

They begin an exercise program. As soon as they regain their energy levels they start to do light exercise – regularly. Those committed eat well and exercise daily, even if this means going for a half an hour walk in the morning or evening. It is important to find the kind of activity you like and to do it regularly, whether it be walking, cycling or swimming.

They understand the relevance lifestyle and adopt health habits. Getting well and maintaining optimal health and wellbeing means looking at (and be willing to change) all aspects of your lifestyle in addition to eating

healthy, exercising regularly and taking relaxation seriously. Those who understand and learn the significance of stress management, relaxation techniques, the importance of balancing work and play in addition to exercise and diet will achieve the best outcomes. These are the patients I always look out for; they are a joy to work with.

Do You Have Any Obstacles To Cure?

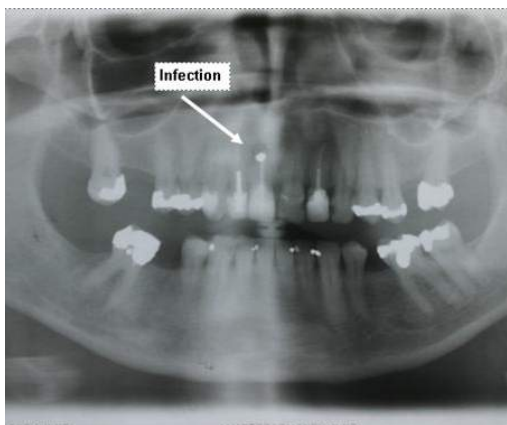
Strength is not born from strength. Strength can be born only from weakness. So be glad of your weaknesses now, they are the beginnings of your strength. *Dr. Claire Weekes*

An obstacle to cure is any body burden that continues to drain your health and is most likely an undiscovered burden. Such burdens can be like a bomb left over from a war from many years ago, they can remain buried deep and could be uncovered any day and literally blow up right in your face.

Hidden Focal Infections

Prior to the penicillin discovery in the 1940's, German research began to study chronic health problems that appeared to have obscure causes. What they found was interesting; they found that even a small problem in one part of the body could cause a disorder in a more distant part and apparently unconnected area.

Chronically inflamed areas, like a rumbling appendix, recurrent tonsillitis, and dental conditions like cracked, dead or diseased teeth all were good examples of likely culprits. However, with the discovery of the "wonder-drugs" (antibiotics) to combat infection, concern for where the infection was coming from suddenly became a lot less important than just "which particular germ" the infection was caused by. All that a doctor needed to do was to identify the specific germ and then work out which particular antibiotic was needed. Antibiotics became the rage in the 1960's, they were freely available and all the focus was on killing germs rather than balancing the good and bad bacteria. In fact, antibiotics were so popular at one stage that you could buy them freely over the counter even at a gas station in America in the early 1960's. This is in essence how we got away from treating the cause to just concentrating on treating the symptom.



Dental research for example has shown that inflammation of the jawbone can act as a seeding ground for a host of health problems including lethargy, poor concentration, irritability, poor sleep patterns, lower back pain, allergies and migraine. Focal infections in the head can have the strongest affect on the body, because of their proximity to the brain and the central nervous system. Root canal therapy can in some cases result long term in a "focal" infection, i.e.; an infection in some part of the body that lies undiscovered much like that

World War 2 bomb. Do you see the hidden focal infection in this patient's X-

ray? This is a patient with rheumatoid arthritis along with a severe yeast infection which both fully resolved after her hidden infection was dealt with. It is important to remember that psoriasis is classified as an auto-immune illness, just like rheumatoid arthritis. Don't believe it when your doctor says there is "no known cause" for your psoriasis, there is always a cause, it's just that the cause hasn't yet been found.

Typical unresolved focal infections include:

- Chronically inflamed tonsils
- Chronic sinus infection
- Osteitis in the jawbone
- Root canal, dead or cracked teeth
- Abscess or cyst in the jaw
- Parasitic infection of the ileo-caecal valve (digestive system)

Be sure that your blood tests (especially the immune and inflammation blood markers) don't show anything unresolved. If you find any hidden sources of inflammation especially, be sure to get to the bottom of it, especially if you just can't seem to get that psoriasis resolved in spite of your best efforts. The following list is a list of blood tests that may help you in determine if you have a sub-acute or chronic sub-clinical infection. This is particularly so if you notice a trend and the results are consistently repeated over a prolonged period of time. Ask your doctor to run these tests, ask a knowledgeable doctor to interpret them for you, and be sure to get copies for your own records.

I like people to plot their own results on a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet, that way they have an instant overview and will be able to establish when they change something about their treatment, if the blood results change as a result too. This way you can see what works and what doesn't and you won't be wasting your time and money on ineffective treatments. Doesn't this make sense?

- Increased or decreased white blood cell counts (any)
- Mildly increased sedimentation rate (ESR)
- Increased total serum globulin
- Increased lymphocytes
- Increased LDH isoenzyme # 1
- Elevated C reactive protein (CRP)

Furthermore, you may want to find a doctor who specializes in Live Blood Cell Analysis, he or she may well uncover a hidden source of inflammation using this technique.

Intestinal Dysbiosis

As you will be aware of by now, there are several hundreds of species of bacteria that live in harmony inside your digestive tract. If you really can't seem to get a handle on your digestive problems when you have psoriasis then I urge you to get a CDSA x 3 test completed by a reputable lab.

There are several different kinds of urine, bowel, breath and blood tests that can detect dysbiosis, but in my opinion the CDSA (do three stool samples on

three concurrent days) is the gold standard. This test will not only determine which microorganisms are at the heart of the problem, it will give you a sensitivity panel outlining which natural and pharmaceutical agents are best suited to eliminate them.

Contact me and I will be able to get this organized for you, anywhere in the world, regardless of where you live. I work with several laboratories in America and can offer many different kinds of tests.

Food Allergies Or Food Sensitivities

A very common hidden and underlying burden is being sensitive or allergic to a particular food. It may take some time before your leaky gut is resolved. The tragedy is that these issues are easily treated once recognized. Be sure to read all about food allergies and food sensitivities in *The Psoriasis Diet* book. You may want to consider doing the food allergy blood test, contact me.

Lack of Sleep

I'm amazed how many people do everything right, except find enough time to rest and sleep when they are on the Psoriasis Program. Lack of sleep can be a particularly effective body burden because it can be a common sign of both a high or too low cortisol level in the body. Chronic lack of sleep is now regarded as a health hazard and has been associated with many different types of health conditions. Decreased immunity and an increased susceptibility to infections are much more common in those who don't sleep enough. Lack of sufficient sleep slows the healing response and prolongs the recovery phase of psoriasis.

The bottom line is that you need at least eight hours of sleep each night, and you may need even more in the first month of commencing the Psoriasis Program.

Moldy or Toxic Environments

Have you noticed that when you moved house that your problems got better or they got worse? In New Zealand we have a particular problem with "Leaky Building Syndrome", many houses were constructed during a boom period and it has been discovered that thousands of houses in Auckland alone leak a considerable amount of water and are literally breeding grounds for molds. If your house or place of employ has a problem such as "Sick Building" Syndrome, then you may find that the best decision you could make is to leave these premises. Try moving house or changing jobs if you have a strong belief or suspicion that this may be the case, it could hold the key to your complete and permanent recovery. Be sure to read the section on mold in this book.

Lack of Clean Water and Fresh Air

Pretty basic stuff, but I have found that many people who just don't seem to recover don't appear to get the basics really right. Do you live or work in an environment with poor airflow or poor air exchange? Are you drinking enough pure and fresh drinking water every day, preferably filtered, which doesn't contain fluoride or chlorine, and the many other chemicals commonly found in

tap water? The basic tenets of good health are high quality fresh foods, pure water and air and plenty of rest and sleep. Your body has an amazing capacity to heal if we give it the right conditions to do so.

Staying Well - Repeat A Short Psoriasis Program Treatment Annually

Last but certainly not least, I recommend that everyone, not only those who used to have psoriasis and who have recovered, repeat at least a short anti-microbial program once a year. I complete a detox each year, and have done so for over twenty-five years. It is my way of cleansing the system and keeping the bad bugs in control. Please view the book called Psoriasis, Cleansing and Detox for further information on how and when detoxification and cleansing is appropriate.

Many chronic diseases, including autoimmune diseases such as psoriasis, but also heart disease and cancers are associated with pathogenic microbes and dysbiosis and we can prevent much disease by periodically eliminating the overpopulation of bad bugs from our body thereby restoring the delicate balance of beneficial and not so beneficial microbes in our digestive systems.

Postscript

Psoriasis is possibly one of the least understood and most widespread causes of not only chronic skin problems, but has been now more recently linked with many different kinds of chronic diseases. Conventional treatment is aimed purely at symptom control, and the cause is never sought because psoriasis is deemed to be an auto-immune disease, with "no known cause". Because yeast infections, leaky gut and SIBO (small intestinal bowel overgrowth) and focal infections are ubiquitous, they are generally overlooked and not even considered in many cases of psoriasis to be a causative factor. A wider awareness of any potential causes of psoriasis could in my opinion certainly lead to a marked reduction to a significant amount of human suffering.

The Psoriasis Program was designed as a manual to help those with psoriasis, and also for practitioners who like to help their patients with psoriasis. My psoriasis books were also written to raise awareness that psoriasis is not mere "trivial skin problem" that will go away if we simply just treat the skin symptoms with creams or drugs.

I have no doubt that the connection between a candida yeast infection, bacterial digestive problems, leaky gut syndrome and psoriasis do exist, whether experts believe it or not. I have absolutely no doubt about it, and based on my own experiences along with the most extensive clinical and research studies by others such as doctors William Crook M.D., Orian Truss M.D., and Sidney Baker M.D., along with countless researchers at PhD level, too many to mention in this book.

Since much of the original research dating back to the 1980's, there have been over 100,000 research papers published on psoriasis and maldigestion and their consequence adverse effects human health. Today, only the ignorant wish to believe that psoriasis is a disease with "no known cause".

There will be no doubt those who read my Psoriasis Program books and pass off my information as “unscientific” and “anecdotal”, because much of my information is based on patient’s case histories and my own extensive clinical experience. In defense I would like to quote what a professor of medicine has to say:

“Clinical experience is the gold standard on which patient care should be based”.
Gene H. Stollerman, M.D., Professor of Medicine, Boston University School of Medicine.

I trust that you enjoyed reading the this book and have learned a few tricks or tips that may have even become a tipping point in your life and help you on your way to health and wellness.

Just A Few Points Before I Conclude:

- **Check out** <http://www.psoriasisprogram.com> and www.ericbakker.com
- **You Tube** - Be sure to watch out for my You Tube videos that will cover many aspects of psoriasis. [Just go to this You Tube Channel](#)
- **Mailing List** - Are you on our Psoriasis Program mailing list? That way you will be the first to know of what I’ve got planned!
- **Consultation** – Yes, you can have a private consultation with me. Skype is the preferred way. You can email my office manager on tracee@naturopath.co.nz and book a time.

References

1. Lactobacillus plantarum reduces Interleukin 6 levels. *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 2002 Dec;76(6): 1249–55.
2. Picardi A, Abeni D. Stressful life events and skin diseases: disentangling evidence from myth. *Psychother Psychosom* 70(3):118–36 (2001 May-Jun).
3. Kabat-Zinn J, Wheeler E, Light T, et al. Influence of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction intervention on rates of skin clearing in patients with moderate to severe psoriasis undergoing phototherapy (UVB) and photochemotherapy (PUVA). *Psychosom Med* 60(5):625–32 (1998 Sep-Oct).
4. Evers AW, Verhoeven EW, Kraaimaat FW, et al. How stress gets under the skin: cortisol and stress reactivity in psoriasis. *Br J Dermatol* 163(5):986–91 (2010 Nov).
5. Tim M P Berghmans, Karel W E Hulsewé, Wim A Buurman, Misha D P Luyer Faculty of Medicine, Maastricht University, Maastricht ER 6229, The Netherlands. June 2012; 13:93. DOI:10.1186/1745-6215-13-93. Source: Pubmed.