

2nd WORLD PSORIASIS & PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS CONFERENCE 2009

“Psoriasis – Skin and Beyond”
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PRESSRELEASE

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Childhood psoriasis - a challenge for all

With limited studies and treatments available, children with psoriasis represent a challenge to researchers and clinicians alike.

One-third of all psoriasis patients first see signs of the disease in childhood. Studies suggest that the onset for psoriasis is commonly between 5 -10 years with an increase in incidence after the age of 15.

A high-impact disease

Psoriasis can have a major impact on a child's quality of life. “Children can be quite cruel and there is a stigma around psoriasis. For a child or a teenager, even mild psoriasis can be a much heavier burden than an adult with more severe psoriasis. It can affect a child's self esteem and whole way of thinking,” says Amy Paller, Professor of Pediatrics, Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, USA. Amy Paller will speak on “Psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis in childhood: therapeutic challenges” on Friday, June 26 at the 2nd World Psoriasis & Psoriatic Arthritis Conference in Folkets Hus, Stockholm.

How to effectively and safely treat children with psoriasis?

Treatment for childhood psoriasis is an area that has been fairly limited. Topical treatments have been common in mild psoriasis. In cases of severe, widespread disease, systemic treatment with drugs is done with care, and restricted in children. Notably, most of these drugs, even though used in children, have not been thoroughly validated in randomized trials for pediatric use. UV light treatment is a common treatment choice for adults. However, its use is quite restricted in children, due to problems with tolerance and compliance, as well as the unknown long-term risks in children of ultraviolet light exposure. Meeting the needs of children with this chronic condition requires an effective and well-tolerated treatment, with a focus on long-term safety.

“Childhood psoriasis affects more than just the patient; it impacts the entire family,” says Lars Ettarp, President of IFPA, (the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations), and the Swedish Psoriasis Association. “Parents must help children understand the disease and ensure treatment compliance, which can be a challenge.”

“As clinicians, we need to help parents understand the disease and how to eliminate or minimize trigger factors, as well as support them emotionally and provide reassurance,” says Professor Paller. “Increased study about childhood psoriasis and the development of new treatment options remains urgent.”

For more information about the 2nd World Psoriasis & Psoriatic Arthritis Conference: www.ifpa-wpc.com



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PSORIASIS ASSOCIATIONS

The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA) is a non-profit organization made up of psoriasis associations from around the world. IFPA unites psoriasis associations so that their global campaign for improved medical care, greater public understanding and increased research will improve the lives of people who live with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Please visit website for more information: www.ifpa-pso.org

Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a systemic disease that could negatively impact the individual's physical functions and quality of life. There are several different presentations of psoriasis, but it most often causes red, scaly patches to appear on the skin.

Psoriatic arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disease which affects the joints. It causes pain, stiffness and swelling in and around the joints. This type of arthritis most often affect the hands, feet, wrists, ankles and lower back. About 30 to 50 percent of adults with psoriasis also get psoriatic arthritis.

Psoriasis affects nearly three percent of the world's population. It can develop in males or females of any age or race. It appears before the age of 25 in about half of the cases, although it can strike at any age including infants and elderly.

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