

Sometimes it seems like doctors speak a different language. They don't mean to. Medical terms are just complicated. There are lots of abbreviations and long, seemingly unpronounceable words.

So we thought we'd help out.

This guide helps you get to grips with all the terminology you need before your appointment. It can help you to ask your doctor for clear skin and also to discuss all of the options that could help you to achieve this.

PSORIASIS DICTIONARY





BEFORE YOU ASK

Psoriasis is a broad term that can come in lots of different forms. To get the right treatment, it's important to know what type of psoriasis you have.

PLAQUE PSORIASIS

This is the most common type of psoriasis. It appears as red, raised, itchy patches on your skin, called plaques.

GUTTATE PSORIASIS

Looks like a rash composed of loads of small spots. Most common in children and young adults.

PUSTULAR PSORIASIS

An uncommon form of psoriasis that appears as raised, white bumps, with red skin underneath. Although it's rare, this can occur alongside plaque psoriasis.

INVERSE PSORIASIS

Occurs in skin folds, such as armpits or buttocks. The skin appears as smooth and shiny, as opposed to the more common rough plaques.

PALMOPLANTAR PSORIASIS

Causes the skin on your palms and soles to become very itchy and can lead to painful cracking.

PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS

A form of arthritis that often affects people with psoriasis. Symptoms include painful stiffness and swelling in the joints, usually in the hands and feet



WHEN YOU ASK

It's important to be honest when speaking to your doctor. If your psoriasis is really affecting your quality of life, make sure you tell them.

They can only find the right treatment for you if they know the full impact of the disease. Here are a few terms that may come up in this conversation.

SEVERITY

Can be 'mild', 'moderate' or 'severe'. As a general rule, a PASI score of under 10 is mild and anything over 10 is moderate-to-severe. Alternatively, mild psoriasis usually gives a BSA score of under 3%, while 3-10% is considered moderate and greater than 10% is severe.

BODY SURFACE AREA (BSA)

Describes what percentage of the body is affected by psoriasis. Measured using the size of a hand, which is approximately 1% of the body surface.

PSORIASIS AREA SEVERITY INDEX (PASI)

A score used to define psoriasis severity, based on redness, thickness, scaling and surface coverage, rated out of 72.

DERMATOLOGY LIFE QUALITY INDEX (DLQI)

A questionnaire to determine the impact that psoriasis has on your quality of life. This is a good starting point to honestly tell your doctor exactly how it affects you.

PSORIASIS DISABILITY INDEX

A questionnaire to determine the impact that psoriasis has on your daily life activities, from choosing clothes to personal relationships.



MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF IT

When describing how psoriasis affects your life, don't skip on the details. Give specific examples of times when your psoriasis gets in the way.



DON'T

**JUST SAY THAT IT MAKES
YOUR LIFE MORE DIFFICULT.**



DO

**EXPLAIN HOW IT MAKES
YOUR LIFE MORE DIFFICULT:**

- Which activities does it affect?
- How often does this happen?
- Do you have a specific example of a time in the past few weeks that your psoriasis stopped you doing something you wanted to do?
- Do you change your behaviour because of your psoriasis?
- How does this make you feel?



THEIR ANSWER

So you've asked for clear skin. Great job. Your doctor should now discuss your options. To get you started, here are some specific terms that they may use when talking about the different treatments available.

TOPICAL

Treatments that are applied directly to the affected area of skin, usually creams and gels. These are often given as the first treatment.

PHOTOTHERAPY

Exposure to short bursts of UV light that can help to clear the skin and is usually given after topical treatments.

SYSTEMICS

Treatments that work on the whole body, rather than a particular area. They are usually given as oral tablets and tend to be offered to people with moderate-to-severe psoriasis, when topical gels and creams are not fully effective.

BIOLOGICS

The newest treatments for psoriasis. Usually given as an injection, biologic treatments are a particular type of systemic, which target substances in the body found at higher levels in people with psoriasis.

PASI IMPROVEMENT

Remember the PASI score from earlier? Your PASI improvement is the percentage that this number drops after you have taken a treatment, to show how effective it is. For example, a 90% improvement is described as PASI 90.

CLEARSKIN

The ultimate goal for most people with psoriasis. Now even more of a possibility than ever before. When doctors say clear skin, they are usually talking about achieving a 100% PASI improvement, or PASI 100.