

## Patient Information Leaflet: Guttate Psoriasis

### What is Guttate Psoriasis?

Guttate psoriasis is a type of psoriasis characterized by small, rain drop-shaped lesions that commonly appear on the trunk, arms, legs, and scalp. It typically appears suddenly and can occur in people of all ages, though it most commonly affects adolescents and young adults. Guttate psoriasis is often triggered by infections, particularly streptococcal throat infections.

### Causes and Triggers:

The exact cause of guttate psoriasis is not fully understood, but it is believed to be an autoimmune condition where the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy skin cells. Common triggers include:

- **Infections:** Particularly streptococcal throat infections.
- **Stress:** Emotional or physical stress may exacerbate symptoms.
- **Weather:** Changes in climate, especially cold, dry weather.
- **Certain Medications:** Some medications can potentially induce psoriasis flares.

### Symptoms:

- Small, red, scaly rain drop-shaped lesions (guttate lesions) scattered over the trunk and limbs.
- Itching and discomfort in the affected areas.
- Dry, flaky skin that may shed.
- Lesions can sometimes appear suddenly following a strep infection.

### Diagnosis:

A dermatologist typically diagnoses guttate psoriasis through a physical examination of the skin and a review of your medical history. In some cases, a skin biopsy might be performed to rule out other skin conditions.

### Management and Treatment Options:

While there is currently no cure for guttate psoriasis, various treatments aim to manage symptoms, reduce inflammation, and improve the appearance of the skin.

1. **Topical Treatments:**
  - **Coal tar lotions:** Soothing, moisturising, anti-proliferative and anti-itch
  - **Corticosteroids:** Anti-inflammatory creams or ointments to reduce redness and inflammation.
  - **Vitamin D Analogues:** Help slow down skin cell growth and reduce scaling.
2. **Phototherapy:**
  - **UVB Therapy:** Involves exposing the skin to narrow band ultraviolet B light under controlled conditions.
3. **Systemic Treatments:**
  - **Oral Medications:** In more severe cases, doctors may prescribe systemic medications, including ciclosporin to take by mouth.
  - **Biologics:** Targeted therapies that modify the immune system, usually reserved for moderate to severe cases.
4. **Lifestyle Modifications:**
  - **Stress Management:** Practice relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, or deep-breathing exercises.
  - **Healthy Diet:** A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids may help support overall skin health.

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- **Avoid Triggers:** Identify and avoid personal triggers, including infections, to reduce flare-ups.

## **Self-Care and Home Remedies:**

- Use gentle, fragrance-free soap substitutes to wash with.
- Soaking in a lukewarm bath with oatmeal may soothe itching.
- Moisturise regularly to combat dryness.

## **When to Seek Medical Advice:**

- If you suspect you have guttate psoriasis or experience new, worsening, or unmanageable symptoms.
- If you have signs of an infection (eg fever, sore throat) that may trigger flares.

## **Conclusion:**

Guttate psoriasis is a manageable condition, and with appropriate treatment and lifestyle adjustments, many people can experience relief from symptoms. Working closely with a dermatologist is essential to develop a personalized management plan.

For any questions or concerns regarding guttate psoriasis or its treatment, please consult your dermatologist

