

Psoriasis Triggers: Six To Track

The six triggers named by NIAMS, Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic, and the one thing everybody blames that is not on any of their lists.

✓ **Verified against published guidance** from NIAMS (NIH), Mayo Clinic & Cleveland Clinic - sources below

Cleveland Clinic says that scratching a plaque can break the skin and lead to infection, and that severe pain, swelling and a fever are symptoms of infection that need a call to your healthcare provider. NIAMS says untreated psoriatic arthritis can lead to irreversible damage, so stiff, swollen or painful joints need a prompt appointment rather than a wait.

✓ Do This

Treat A Sore Throat Early

- Strep is a named trigger
- NIAMS and Mayo both list it
- Guttate psoriasis often follows it

COACH'S TIP Infection heads every trigger list.

Protect The Skin From Injury

- Cuts, scrapes and bug bites
- So does surgery
- A severe sunburn counts

COACH'S TIP Cleveland and Mayo both name it.

Moisturise Through Cold Weather

- Cold, dry conditions are a trigger
- Cleveland lists temperature change
- Mayo lists weather directly

COACH'S TIP Winter is a season of flares.

Review Your Medicine List

- Lithium
- Antimalarial drugs
- Beta blockers and blood pressure drugs

COACH'S TIP Never stop a drug on your own.

Stop Smoking, Cut Alcohol

- Smoking raises risk and severity
- Secondhand smoke counts too
- Heavy drinking is a trigger

COACH'S TIP Mayo names all three.

Ask About Joints And Heart

- About 1 in 3 develop arthritis
- Early treatment protects joints
- NIAMS names heart attack and stroke

COACH'S TIP Psoriasis is not only skin.

✗ Do Not

Do Not Chase A Psoriasis Diet

- No food appears on any trigger list
- Obesity is a risk, not a flare trigger
- NIAMS, Mayo and Cleveland agree

COACH'S TIP Spend that effort on real triggers.

Do Not Treat It As Contagious

- You cannot catch it by touch
- Mayo says the same
- Cleveland says so directly

COACH'S TIP Worth saying out loud at home.

Do Not Stop Steroids Suddenly

- Rapid withdrawal is a trigger
- Mayo lists it by name
- Oral or injected both count

COACH'S TIP Taper with your prescriber.

Do Not Scratch The Plaques

- Broken skin can get infected
- Scales tear and bleed
- Severe pain, swelling and fever

COACH'S TIP Cleveland says call if that happens.

Do Not Expect A Cure

- There is no cure
- Treatment manages the disease
- Remission can last months or years

COACH'S TIP Aim at remission, not a cure.

Do Not Ignore Low Mood

- NIAMS names anxiety and depression
- Sleep quality suffers too
- Low self esteem is on the list

COACH'S TIP It belongs in the appointment.

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THIS SHEET

Three figures worth knowing

3 to 4 days Skin cell turnover, down from about 30 days

3% More than 3% of the US population has psoriasis

1 in 3 Diagnosed people who develop psoriatic arthritis