



TREATING PSORIASIS MAY IMPROVE RELATED CARDIOVASCULAR SYMPTOMS

BOSTON (July 28, 2016) — Approximately 7.5 million people in the United States have psoriasis, and the impact of this disease goes far beyond its visible effects on the skin.

“People with psoriasis, particularly those with more severe disease, have an increased risk for a variety of other health problems, including obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke and heart attack,” says board-certified dermatologist Jashin J. Wu, MD, FAAD, director of dermatology research at the Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center. “Psoriasis patients, even those with mild disease, need to be aware of how this condition affects their overall health.”

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory disease characterized in most patients by red, raised patches of skin, or plaques, covered with silvery-white scales. According to Dr. Wu, the inflammatory effects of this skin disease can impact the entire body, which may lead to cardiovascular problems.

Treating psoriasis may help improve cardiovascular symptoms by reducing skin inflammation, which in turn leads to less inflammation elsewhere in the body, Dr. Wu says. Treatment options for moderate to severe psoriasis include phototherapy; systemic medications such as acitretin, cyclosporine and methotrexate; and biologics, which block the immune system responses that fuel inflammation.

Recent studies have indicated that biologic medications may improve cardiovascular symptoms in some psoriasis patients, Dr. Wu says, but the exact reason for this improvement remains unclear. He says more research is required to determine whether a direct connection exists between biologic treatment and the improvement of cardiovascular symptoms, and to evaluate how biologics compare to other psoriasis treatments in reducing cardiovascular diseases. In the meantime, he advises all psoriasis patients to seek treatment, maintain a healthy weight and talk to their doctor about screening for cardiovascular conditions.

“Psoriasis is a serious medical condition that can have a detrimental effect on your overall health,” Dr. Wu says. “If you have this disease, talk to a board-certified dermatologist to determine the best treatment option for you. Managing your psoriasis is not just about improving your skin — it’s about caring for your entire well-being.”

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News Release

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