

PSORIASIS

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Week 19

Educational Objectives:

1. Be able to differentiate psoriasis from other dermatologic conditions
2. Describe the available treatment modalities for psoriasis
3. Know the indications for referral to a specialist
4. Be able to identify the quality of life issues in the psoriatic patient

CASE ONE:

A 35-year-old male with a 5-year history of psoriasis comes in complaining that he recently lost his job as a bartender due to his “repulsive” skin lesions. His father had psoriasis and was similarly discriminated against as a chef. His physical exam is remarkable for typical psoriatic plaques involving the scalp and intertriginous sites. Examination of his nails reveals pitting, with some onycholysis. He comes to you, desperate for treatment.

Questions:

1. **How can you clinically distinguish psoriasis from other skin conditions? How is it diagnosed?**
2. **What factors may exacerbate his underlying condition?**
3. **Describe the topical therapies that are available. What are the limitations of these treatments? Which are the most effective?**
4. **At what point would it be appropriate to refer him to a specialist?**

5. **Discuss other available therapeutic modalities.**

6. **What other possible issues should be addressed in this patient?**

7. **Bonus Question: What is the currently accepted theory regarding the pathophysiology of psoriasis?**

Primary References:

1. Smith CH, Barker JN. Psoriasis and its management. *British Medical Journal*. 2006. 333:380-384.
2. Jobling R. Psoriasis. *British Medical Journal*. 2007. 334:953-954.
3. Schon MP, Boehncke WH. Psoriasis. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2005. 352:1899-1911.

Additional References:

1. Cayce KA, et al. A red, scaly rash: How to recognize and treat psoriasis. *JCOM*. 2004. 11:463-474.
2. National Psoriasis Foundation website: www.psoriasis.org
3. Hunter J, Savin J, and Dahl M. *Clinical Dermatology*. 3rd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Science Ltd; 2002.