Over 35 percent of people with psoriasis have facial psoriasis. Facial psoriasis most often affects the eyebrows, the skin between the nose and upper lip, the upper forehead, around the ears and the hairline.

**What are the treatment options for facial psoriasis?**

Treating facial psoriasis may be different than psoriasis on other areas due to facial skin being more sensitive and thinner. Topical treatments are the first-line (generally the first treatments recommended according to treatment standards) treatment options for mild psoriasis. Topicals for facial psoriasis can range from over-the-counter (OTC) to prescription strength.

OTC products include non-irritating moisturizers, petroleum jelly and products that include salicylic acid to help remove scales.

Prescription topicals include:

- Low-strength topical corticosteroids (also called steroids), such as hydrocortisone for short periods
- Dovonex (calcipotriene) is a topical vitamin D derivative that comes in an ointment and scalp solution
- Tazorac (tazarotene) is a topical vitamin A derivative
- Protopic (tacrolimus) and Elidel (pimecrolimus) are non-steroid treatments approved for treating eczema that are effective for treating psoriasis on the face and other sensitive areas

Always follow prescribed treatment instructions and use the least amount necessary. Usually, the amount of topical that fits on your fingertip is enough to treat an area the size of your hand. If you are using an OTC topical, speak with your health care provider about what would be appropriate for you.

It is important to remember that response times to treatments vary among individuals. If your treatment plan is not working or meeting your treatment goals, speak with your health care provider about other treatment options that may be appropriate for you.
Psoriasis around the eyes

Psoriasis around the eye is extremely rare but can cause inflammation, dryness, discomfort and may impair your vision. It may also affect the eyelids, causing redness and inflammation of the edges or the whole eyelid and plaques that cover the eyelashes. Inflammation of the eyelids may cause the eyelids to turn upward or downward. This can lead to eyelashes rubbing and irritating the eye. If you have psoriasis around the eyes, we recommend speaking with a dermatologist (skin doctor) and an ophthalmologist (doctor who specializes in treating eye diseases).

- OTC products, such as baby shampoo diluted with water can help reduce inflammation by washing the edges of the eyelids and eyelashes. You may also use a cotton-tip applicator or soft washcloth with Ocusoft or Cliradex to help remove scales on and around the eyelids.
- Prescription treatments may include Protopic, Elidel or a special topical steroid made for use around the eyes. Protopic and Elidel are safe and effective for use on eyelids. Use of topical steroids on the eyelids must be carefully supervised by your health care provider because eyelid skin can be easily damaged and overuse around the eyes may lead to glaucoma and cataracts.

Psoriasis in the ears

Psoriasis in the ears generally occurs in the external ear canal (not inside the ear or behind the eardrum). This can cause plaque buildup that blocks the ear canal and may lead to temporary hearing loss. Do not insert objects (including your fingers) or anything rigid into the ear to prevent damage to the eardrum and avoid pushing plaques further into the ear.

- Plaques can be softened with warm water, followed by a thin layer of mineral oil on a cotton-tip applicator. OTC ear-cleaning kits may also be helpful in removing some of the plaque buildup.
- Prescription treatments may include Dovonex, Tazorac or steroid solutions that can be dripped into the ear canal or applied to the outside of the ear.

Psoriasis in and around the mouth and nose

In rare cases, psoriasis can affect areas that have mucous membranes, such as the gums, the tongue, inside the cheek or inside the nose. Symptoms in these areas generally appear as white or gray lesions and can cause difficulty in chewing and swallowing food. Most psoriasis treatments for the mouth and nose involve the use of special topical steroids designed to treat mucous membranes.

Additionally, psoriasis can affect the lips. Treatment for psoriasis on the lips include Protopic, Elidel or low-potency topical steroids, such as hydrocortisone 1% ointment.

What should I do next?

Contact our Patient Navigation Center to find providers, prepare for appointments, discuss treatments and get help with accessing treatments (find contact information below).

6600 SW 92nd Ave., Suite 300 | Portland, OR 97223-7195
800-723-9166 | education@psoriasis.org | www.psoriasis.org/navigationcenter

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