Psoriatic arthritis is different for each person. It can develop slowly with mild symptoms or quickly with severe symptoms. Untreated psoriatic arthritis can result in permanent joint damage.

If you experience pain in your joints or entheses, speak with your health care provider immediately. They can refer you to a rheumatologist (a doctor who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of arthritis and other diseases of the joints, muscles and bone). Early diagnosis and treatment can help relieve symptoms and may help prevent joint damage.

What are the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis?

Psoriatic arthritis causes swelling, pain and stiffness. It causes stiffness of joints or affected areas in the morning or after resting that generally improves with movement and physical activity. You may also experience nail changes such as nail separation from the nail bed, pitting or discoloration of the nail.

It can affect any joint of the body and is commonly seen in the peripheral joints (arm and leg joints such as elbows, wrists, hands, feet, fingers and toes). But it can also affect the spine, hips and shoulders.
There are unique characteristics or effects that psoriatic arthritis can have. You may experience more than one type of these effects that may change over time.

**Dactylitis [dak-ti-l-AI-tis]** is inflammation and swelling of an entire finger or toe, often called “sausage digit”. Dactylitis occurs when inflammation affects the small joints and entheses of a finger or toe. It usually involves a few fingers or toes asymmetrically (not affecting the same fingers or toes on the left and right hands or feet).

**Enthesitis [en-thi-SAI-tis]** is inflammation of the entheses. Common areas affected by enthesitis include the bottoms of the feet (also called plantar fascia), Achilles’ tendons, elbows, knees, ribs, spine and pelvis.

**Spondylitis [spon-dil-I-tis]** is inflammation of the spine. Symptoms of spondylitis include inflammation and stiffness of the neck, lower back and where the spine connects to the pelvis.

### What are treatment options for psoriatic arthritis?

Treating your psoriatic arthritis is important to help relieve pain, reduce inflammation, help keep joints healthy and possibly prevent permanent joint damage. Work with your health care provider to set your personal goals for managing your psoriatic arthritis. This will help you to know what to expect from your treatments.

There are different treatment options for psoriatic arthritis:

- **Biologics**, are made from living sources such as human, animal or bacteria cells. They are given as an injection (shot) or intravenous (IV) infusion. Biologics work by targeting and lowering the overactive parts of the immune system that play a role in psoriasis.

- **Oral treatments** are medicines that you take by mouth. Some oral treatments target specific cells of the immune system to lower part of the immune system that is overactive. Other oral treatments may act on your whole immune system to lower the overactivity.

- **Off-label systemic treatments** are medicines that you use for a disease or health condition other than the one it was approved for by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Some off-label treatments that you may use for psoriatic arthritis include antimalarial treatments, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and systemic steroids. For more information about treatment options, visit [www.psoriasis.org/treatments](http://www.psoriasis.org/treatments).

### 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).