

August 2025



PSORIASIS ACTION MONTH

Over 8 million people in the United States and 125 million worldwide live with psoriasis. This month is a great time to come together to honor, recognize, and educate each other on Psoriasis and its impact on our lives.

When it comes to psoriasis, you might first think of the pain, itching, and flaky skin. As frustrating as those symptoms are, solving them means addressing much more than the body's surface.

Create Your Own Care Path

The [National Psoriasis Foundation Care Path](#) provides you with the tools you need to find a provider, ease symptoms, and optimize your health. If things change, you can revisit the Care Path and get things back on the right track.

Find Care

It is best to work with a dermatologist for psoriasis and a rheumatologist for psoriatic arthritis to get the correct diagnosis and to find the best treatment plan for you. However, the first person you may want to see is your primary care provider (PCP).

Find a health care provider with experience in treating psoriasis with the National Psoriasis Foundation's [Health Care Provider Directory](#).

Prepare

Get the most out of your visit, plan to discuss changes to your disease, understand your diagnosis and treatment options, talk over questions or concerns, and make a treatment decision. **Here's what to bring to your appointment:**

PSORIASIS ACTION MONTH

STRESS-INDUCED HYPERTENSION

BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT: KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR CARE

CALMING CHAMOMILE LAVENDER TEA

RESOURCES TO KNOW

Getting Help with Your Psoriasis: Items to bring to your appointment

Whether you are a new patient or are going in for a follow-up appointment, it can help to bring the following to your appointment:

- A photo identification card or driver's license.
- Your health insurance card.
- A list of your current medications, vitamins, or supplements.
- A list of treatments you have tried in the past that caused side effects, did not work, or stopped working.
- Information on any new symptoms including flares, mental or emotional symptoms, or other new symptoms.
- Concerns or questions you want to discuss.
- A list of other health conditions or diseases you might have.
- Medical records from previous providers (if you are a new patient).

Treat

It's important to find an effective treatment to clear your skin symptoms and address the systemic inflammation that drives psoriasis, because it raises your risk for other health problems, even with mild symptoms. There is no one treatment that works best for everyone, so you may have to try a few until you find the one that's best for you.

Your Treatment Options

The type of treatment your health care provider may prescribe for psoriasis will depend on a variety of factors including the location and severity of your psoriatic disease, your medical history, and whether you are an adult, teen, or child.

- **Topicals**
 - Topical treatments are applied to the skin and can be purchased over the counter or by prescription.
- **Phototherapy**
 - Also known as light therapy, phototherapy involves exposing the skin to ultraviolet light on a regular basis under medical supervision.
- **Oral Systemics**
 - Oral treatments are small-molecule medicines that are taken by mouth. The latest oral treatments selectively target specific molecules inside immune cells.
- **Biologics and Biosimilars**
 - Biologic drugs, or biologics, are given by injection (shot) or intravenous (IV) infusion. A biologic is a protein-based drug derived from living cells cultured in a laboratory.

Thrive

Having psoriasis plaques on the skin is a sign of the inflammation throughout your body. This inflammation can contribute to comorbidities. A comorbidity is a disease or condition that is related to a health condition you have, such as psoriasis.

People living with psoriasis are at a higher risk of developing a comorbidity. **Comorbidities associated with psoriasis can include:**

- Psoriatic arthritis
- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Kidney disease

Having an increased risk does not guarantee that you will develop a new condition. Talk with your health care provider about screening for these possible comorbidities and how to take action to lower your risk.

STRESS-INDUCED HYPERTENSION

High blood pressure is defined as anything over 120 mmHg (top number) or over 80 mmHg (bottom number). When you experience stress, hormones like adrenaline and cortisol make your heartbeat faster, which causes blood vessels to constrict and ultimately raises blood pressure. Usually, these hormone surges are temporary, but if stress is prolonged, these hormones stay elevated and the effects can lead to stress-induced hypertension, which can take a toll on your heart, blood vessels, and kidneys.

Implementing the following techniques can help you maintain a healthy blood pressure:

- **Practice Mindfulness:** Regular meditation and relaxation techniques can help lower stress hormones and promote relaxation. Just a few minutes each day can make a noticeable difference in your stress levels.
- **Be Physically Active:** Exercise is a powerful tool for stress management. Activities such as walking, swimming, or yoga can help lower blood pressure by improving cardiovascular health and reducing stress hormones.
- **Establish Healthy Sleep Habits:** Quality sleep is crucial for managing stress. Aim for 7 to 9 hours of restful sleep each night, and establish a regular sleep schedule.
- **Foster Social Connections:** Strong relationships and support networks can buffer the effects of stress. Make time to connect with friends and family and seek professional support if needed.
- **Adopt a Balanced Diet:** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help manage blood pressure. Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables are all healthy options. Avoid excessive caffeine, sodium, and processed foods that can elevate stress and blood pressure levels.
- **Limit Alcohol:** Alcohol can intensify emotions, which can trigger a stress response in the body. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.

Stress can take a serious toll on your body. Better blood pressure management begins with understanding the role of stress and actively working to find effective ways to manage it. Preventing and managing stress-induced hypertension requires self-awareness and a focus on self-care.



BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT: KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR CARE

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When your doctor is not available and you need medical care, it's good to know your options. You'll save time and money while getting the right care at the right place!

YOUR OPTIONS

TELADOC (TELEHEALTH)

- Visit teladoc.com
- Get a video consult with a doctor 24/7
- Convenient for minor health issues

AVERAGE COST: \$55
(varies by plan)

RETAIL CLINIC (SUCH AS MINUTECLINIC)

- Basic care from a nurse practitioner
- Can walk in without an appointment

AVERAGE COST: \$3
(varies by plan)

URGENT CARE CENTER

- Fast care from a doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant
- Often open after 5pm and on weekends

AVERAGE COST: \$37
(varies by plan)

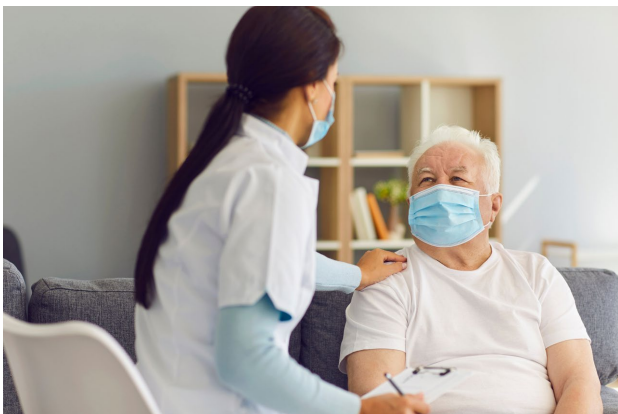
EMERGENCY ROOM

- Care for severe emergencies available 24/7

AVERAGE COST: \$442
(varies by plan)

- **For minor health issues** such as sore throat, fevers, allergy symptoms, colds, flu, skin issues, etc. visit **Teladoc, Retail Clinic, or an Urgent Care Center.**
- **For moderate health issues** such as migraines, vomiting, asthma attacks, severe cough, wounds requiring stitches, etc. visit a **Retail Clinic or an Urgent Care Center.**
- **For life threatening emergencies** such as chest pain, severe abdominal pain, coughing or throwing up blood, head trauma, etc. visit the **nearest Emergency Room.**

For more information, visit bluecrossNC.com/knowyouroptions.



CALMING CHAMOMILE LAVENDER TEA

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INGREDIENTS:

- 1 chamomile tea bag
- 1/2 teaspoon dried lavender flowers
- 1 teaspoon honey (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Steep the chamomile tea bag and dried lavender flowers in hot water for 5-7 minutes.
- Add honey for sweetness if desired.
- Sip on this calming tea to relax and unwind after a stressful day.

NUTRITION FACTS

Calories 5
Protein 0g
Carbohydrates 2g
Fat 0g
Fiber 0g



Benefit	Vendor	Website/Email/Contact
Medical	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	https://www.bluecrossnc.com/
Blue Connect	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	Blue Connect
My Pregnancy Program	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	Download the <i>My Pregnancy through Blue Cross NC</i> app to get started
NCHIP Concierge	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	1-800-795-9402
Mental Health/Substance Abuse	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	Find a therapist Headway



HAVE SOMETHING YOU
WANT TO SHARE?
LET US KNOW!

