

New Report on Burden of Psoriasis

May 07, 2015

Survey reveals that more than half of people in Ireland with psoriasis have been the target of unpleasant comments about their skin.

- First of its kind report launched to highlight far-reaching impact of psoriasis
- More than half of people surveyed (56%) have been the target of negative, unpleasant comments about their psoriasis¹
- More than 73,000 people are affected by psoriasis in Ireland³, and 9,000 of those have a severe form of the disease⁴
- Those with severe psoriasis have 43% increased risk of stroke²
- Over half of people surveyed agreed it impacted on their love life, whilst a third stated that it stopped them from dating entirely¹
- One in five (21%) admit their psoriasis prevented them from applying for a job¹, and people with severe psoriasis are almost twice as likely to be unemployed versus those who have mild psoriasis⁵
- 75,000 work days are lost annually due to impact of the disease⁶
- Almost all (93%) have felt embarrassed by their psoriasis¹

May, 2015: A new report launched today has exposed the hidden burden and true impact of psoriasis in Ireland. One of the most disturbing revelations identified in the report is that more than half of people living with this disease (54%) have been the target of negative, unpleasant comments about their psoriasis¹.

Deputy Jerry Buttimer, Chairperson, Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children officially launched the Burden of Psoriasis report, which is the first of its kind to review the prevalence, incidence and severity of psoriasis in Ireland.



The report is supported by the Irish Skin Foundation and produced by Novartis Ireland in conjunction with the National University of Ireland, Galway with clinical input from leading dermatologists Professor Louise Barnes, Professor Brian Kirby, Professor Oliver Fitzgerald and Dr Anne Marie Tobin. The authors analysed co-morbidities associated with psoriasis, which include psoriatic arthritis, hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular events such as stroke and myocardial infarction. The report found that those with severe psoriasis have 43% increased risk of stroke². More than 73,000 people are affected by psoriasis in Ireland³, and 9 000 of those have a severe form of the disease⁴.

An attitudinal survey of people living with psoriasis was also conducted to coincide with the report. The survey focused on the psycho-social impact of psoriasis to illustrate the burden on relationships, career and day-to-day life.

With regard to the impact of the disease on the personal lives of those surveyed, it was revealed that over half (54%) agreed it has had an impact on their love life and a third (33%) of respondents admitted that their skin condition has prevented them from dating entirely¹. Worryingly, one in five (21%) admitted that their psoriasis has stopped them from applying for a job¹. Indeed, the report indicates that people with severe psoriasis are almost twice as likely to be unemployed versus those who have mild psoriasis⁵.

Commenting on the launch of the report, **Deputy Jerry Buttimer, Chairperson, Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children** said, *"There are over 73,000 people in Ireland living with psoriasis and this report has revealed the untold burden of this often debilitating skin disease. Psoriasis has a significant impact on quality of life issues, including feelings of embarrassment and links to other illnesses such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and depression."*

“The report also found that up to 6 000 people in Ireland develop psoriasis each year, and approximately 75 000 work days are lost annually. What is strikingly obvious from reading the report is the reality that psoriasis is more than just a skin disease; it can have a seriously negative impact on those living with it and on society as a whole.”

Professor Louise Barnes, Consultant Dermatologist, St. James’s Hospital and co-author of the report said, *“Psoriasis can often be misunderstood and without effective management it can lead to extremely poor quality of life issues. The report strives to expose the hidden burden that psoriasis can have on patients, and to encourage better understanding of this condition. Approximately 9,000 people suffer with severe psoriasis across Ireland.”*

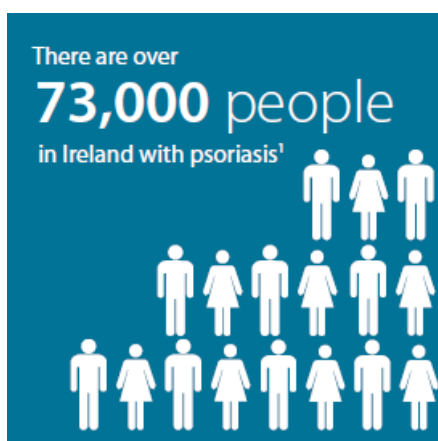
“It is vital that we continue to invest in dermatology in order to improve patient care and management of this chronic skin disease, including providing equitable access to specialised care and innovative treatments.”

An overwhelming number of those affected (93%) have felt embarrassed by their psoriasis; with 77% indicating their skin has made them ‘hide themselves away’¹. In addition to this, 73% of those surveyed agreed that their psoriasis has negatively impacted on their social life¹.

Interestingly, the results also highlighted the impact psoriasis can have on consumer behaviour as 89% of patients confirmed that their psoriasis determines the products they buy and the vast majority (86%) agreed that their psoriasis affects the choice of clothing they wear¹.

Loretto Callaghan, Managing Director, Novartis Ireland said, *“As a leader and innovator in healthcare in Ireland, Novartis is committed to patients and focused on developing innovative patient-centred treatments. We are delighted to support this report and look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure that those living with psoriasis in Ireland have access to the most effective treatments and therapies available.”*

Speaking at the report launch, **Professor Eoin O’Brien, Chairman, Irish Skin Foundation (ISF)** said, *“I welcome this report’s contribution to our understanding of the prevalence and impact of psoriasis in Ireland. Psoriasis can be very difficult to live with and, left untreated, has been linked with heart conditions, depression and anxiety. The ISF urges policy makers to allocate adequate resources to ensure appropriate and accessible treatment for all children and adults with psoriasis so they may live unburdened by the disease.”*



[Click here to view survey results \(PDF 0.2 MB\)](#)



[Click here to read the full report \(PDF 1.5 MB\)](#)

References:

1. Psoriasis Patient Survey, Ireland, April 2015
2. Gelfand JM, Dommasch ED, Shin DB, Azfar RS, Kurd SK, Wang X, et al. The risk of stroke in patients with psoriasis. The Journal of investigative dermatology. 2009;129(10):2411-8.
3. The Impact of Psoriasis in Ireland Epidemiology, Quality of Life, Co-morbidities and Treatment Goals, p 6.
4. The Impact of Psoriasis in Ireland Epidemiology, Quality of Life, Co-morbidities and Treatment Goals, p 9.
5. Armstrong, A.W., et al., Quality of life and work productivity impairment among psoriasis patients: findings from the National Psoriasis Foundation survey data 2003–2011. PloS one, 2012. 7(12): p. e52935
6. The Impact of Psoriasis in Ireland Epidemiology, Quality of Life, Co-morbidities and Treatment Goals, p 23

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