

Understanding Your Skin

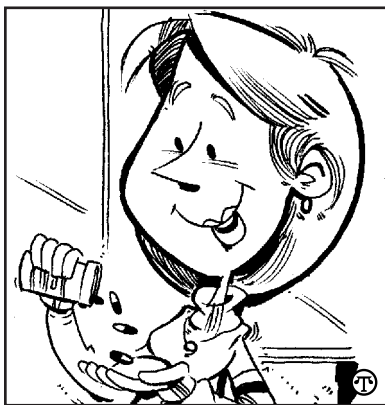
Psoriasis: More Than Skin Deep

(NAPSA)—If you are one of the millions of people in the United States who suffer from psoriasis and are tired of sticky or greasy creams that ruin clothes and often don't work, there is hope. More and more doctors are now prescribing oral medications in an effort to help their patients get faster and longer-lasting control over this difficult disease.

Psoriasis can be very frustrating for people of all ages, genders, and races, and can greatly affect your lifestyle, emotional well-being, social life and ability to work. By taking these simple steps, you can help yourself take control of your psoriasis:

- **Make an appointment with a dermatologist.** More than four million people with psoriasis don't see a doctor regularly for treatment of their condition. Many give up hope if the medication they try doesn't work. Now doctors are increasing their use of system treatments for the disease, such as light therapy and oral medications (systemics). These approaches often have better results than topical treatments (creams), generally used to treat milder forms of the disease, although systemics may have more side effects. If you have moderate to severe psoriasis, now is the time to seek help from your doctor.

- **Ask your dermatologist about different treatment options.** There probably are treatment options you have not tried. New research shows that earlier and ongoing use of a wider variety of therapies, such as oral medication, is often more successful in controlling severe psoriasis



Oral medications may help psoriasis patients keep the disease under control.

than creams. Some currently available oral medications provide effective treatment without the risk of suppressing your immune system and therefore are safer for people who have an infection, or are at risk for infection, although they may have other side effects.

- **Get more information.** There are resources available to help psoriasis sufferers navigate the sometimes-confusing waters of diagnosis and treatment, as well as provide support and inspiration in continuing therapy over time. One such resource, known as Psoria-SenseSM, is an American Academy of Dermatology award-winning education program for psoriasis patients sponsored by Roche. It provides thoughtful advice and suggestions on symptom relief and improving quality of life, as well as educational materials and special patient offers. To enroll free of charge in the Psoria-Sense Patient Education program, visit www.psoria-sense.com.