

Getting Involved

Everyday Americans Bring Hope For Psoriasis Cure

(NAPSA)—People across the country have the chance to help in the fight against a common and sometimes devastating disease: psoriasis.

Psoriasis, a noncontagious disease of the immune system, affects as many as 7.5 million people in the U.S. The most common form of the condition, known as plaque psoriasis, causes red, raised lesions, covered with a white-colored buildup of dead skin cells. Those lesions often cause people with the disease to experience anxiety, embarrassment or low self-esteem. Additionally, 10 to 30 percent of sufferers develop psoriatic arthritis, which causes swelling and pain in joints.

New Idea, New Hope

Fortunately, an effort known as the National Psoriasis Victor Henschel BioBank may help find a cure for psoriasis. The BioBank is seeking 2,000 DNA samples from volunteers by the end of 2007. Both those with psoriasis and people who do not have the disease can participate.

Collected samples are kept confidential—meaning no name or personal identifying information is attached to them—and will be made available to scientists working towards a psoriasis cure. The BioBank will enable researchers to evaluate an individual's disease over a long period of time in a way that no other study has previously allowed.

The bank recently attracted the attention of Carla Perovich, a college sophomore who has psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis—and who deals with the insecurities of psoriasis every day.

After learning that there is no cure for psoriasis but that doctors



Join the thousands of Americans who are helping to find a cure for psoriasis.

believe there is a strong genetic component to the disease, Perovich volunteered to participate in the bank. Perovich hopes her commitment will help future generations manage the disease.

"We have to help each other to find a cure," says Perovich. "I couldn't expect there to be a cure if I wasn't willing to help, myself."

About The BioBank

The BioBank is a research initiative of the National Psoriasis Foundation and is one of only a few banks run by a patient-advocacy group, rather than a drug company or hospital. Individuals who volunteer to provide samples to the bank commit to working with the Psoriasis Foundation for at least five years. After completing initial paperwork, a blood sample and swab of cheek cells are submitted to the BioBank, along with a medical history.

To participate or to learn more about psoriasis, visit the Web site www.psoriasis.org/biobank.