



MASSAGE AND PSOARIASIS

It's important to point out that psoriasis is not contagious!

Under normal circumstances, superficial skin cells are replaced roughly every 28 to 32 days. With psoriasis, skin cells replicate at a vastly accelerated rate: instead of a month-long turnover cycle, they are replaced every 4 to 6 days. The consequence is a patchy pile-up of keratinized epithelial cells, often with a silvery scale: these are the plaques of the most common form of psoriasis.

A genetic link might seem to be part of the picture, because the incidence of psoriasis is higher within families.

Plaque psoriasis is the most common form of this disorder. It frequently appears over joints: knees and elbows are common. Some people have one small lesion that appears in the same place for a few weeks every year or so; others have huge lesions that might cover their back or trunk, scalp, hands or feet. Even when the condition goes into remission, the skin might sustain enough damage to appear permanently discolored and scarred.

Complications

Psoriasis doesn't usually involve dangerous complications, unless the lesions bleed and get infected, or unless a person with erythrodermic psoriasis has a fluid-loss crisis.

Massage

Massage has been used for centuries to help relieve all types of illness. In the days of Hippocrates, doctors were instructed to rub olive oil into the skin of those who had psoriasis. The olive oil would soothe the dry skin while the massage would relieve tension in the individual.

Massage can also promote the flow of lymphatic fluid, lowers levels of stress hormones and boost productive endorphins, which can help with the pain of psoriasis.

There are no contraindications for psoriasis, but it is important to understand that a spot might be sore and tender. Massage is fine for people with psoriasis, except in the acute stages. During this time, massage is not recommended directly on the lesions or patches of red skin.

Clients with psoriasis can benefit from bodywork that includes *the whole body*, as long as the stimulus doesn't increase itching or irritation.