

Psoriasis Treatment Choices: Patient Perspectives and Preferences— A Multi-country Qualitative Study

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Background and Methods

- As the therapeutic landscape for psoriasis continues to expand, both patients and clinicians have access to a broader array of systemic treatment options. This study sought to characterize the real-world experiences of adults with psoriasis who are candidates for systemic therapy, with a focus on quantifying disease burden, identifying persistent unmet needs, and elucidating patient-driven treatment priorities. Particular attention was given to evaluating which treatment attributes, especially those related to efficacy, safety, and mode of administration, are most important to patients.
- Qualitative interviews were conducted (February to May 2025) with 50 adults with psoriasis who met International Psoriasis Council criteria for systemic therapy eligibility. Participants were from 11 countries (n=5 each from Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US, and the UK; n=4 from Spain; n=1 from Belgium).
- A semi-structured interview guide was developed according to a comprehensive literature review and in collaboration with clinical experts, patient advocates, and qualitative researchers. Interviews explored patients' lived experiences, perceptions of psoriasis, and key treatment attributes.
- All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using a Rapid and Rigorous Qualitative Data Analysis framework.¹⁻⁴ Results are summarized by emergent themes; disease experience, treatment expectations, perceived benefit-risk trade-offs, and administration and adherence considerations.

Results

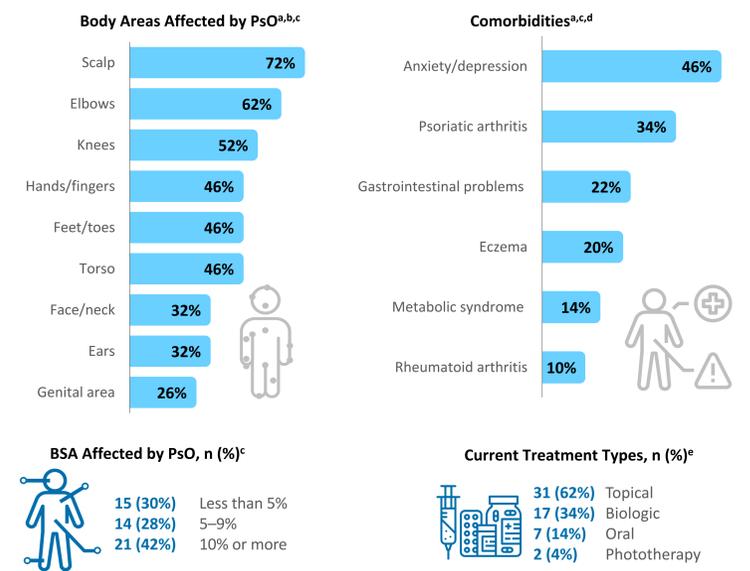
- Participants' characteristics are listed in **Table 1**.
- Most participants had been living with psoriasis for more than 5 years, and 42% reported a body surface area involvement $\geq 10\%$ (**Figure 1**).
- The most frequently reported comorbidities were anxiety or depression, psoriatic arthritis, and gastrointestinal conditions (**Figure 1**).
- The most frequently affected body areas were the scalp, elbows, knees, hands, feet, torso, and genital areas (**Figure 1**).
- Participants reported current use of topical therapies, injections/infusions, and oral medications (**Figure 1**).

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Patients (N=50)
Age	
Mean (SD)	47.3 (13.8)
Min-Max	20.0–76.0
Median (Q1–Q3)	45.0 (38.2–58.8)
Sex at birth	
Male	19 (38.0%)
Female	31 (62.0%)
Time since initial diagnosis	
Less than 1 year	3 (6%)
1–5 years	8 (16%)
More than 5 years	39 (78%)

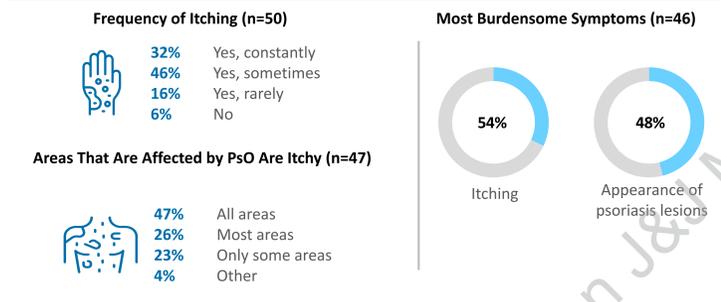
Results (cont'd)

Figure 1. Responder Clinical Characteristics (n=50)



^a Participants could select all that apply; ^b Torso includes chest, back, and abdomen; the chart shows the body areas most commonly affected by PsO, reported by 25% or more participants; ^c Based on patient self-report; ^d Most commonly reported comorbidities, reported by 10% or more participants; ^e Patients could report more than one current treatment.

Figure 2. Itch Frequency and Areas Involved Over the Past 4 Weeks



Over 90% of patients continued to experience itch in the previous 4 weeks. Of these, nearly half of participants indicated itching occurred on all areas affected by psoriasis (**Figure 2**). Of symptoms that patients identified as being the most burdensome, itching and the appearance of psoriasis lesions were mentioned most frequently (**Figure 2**).

I think the itchiness because you always want to scratch. — Pt in Canada

I'd say just the visual aspect in some places makes me uncomfortable, in terms of my hands or maybe some of the stuff in the hair. — Pt in UK

Figure 4. Top Three Most Important Treatment Benefits (n, %) (n=50)

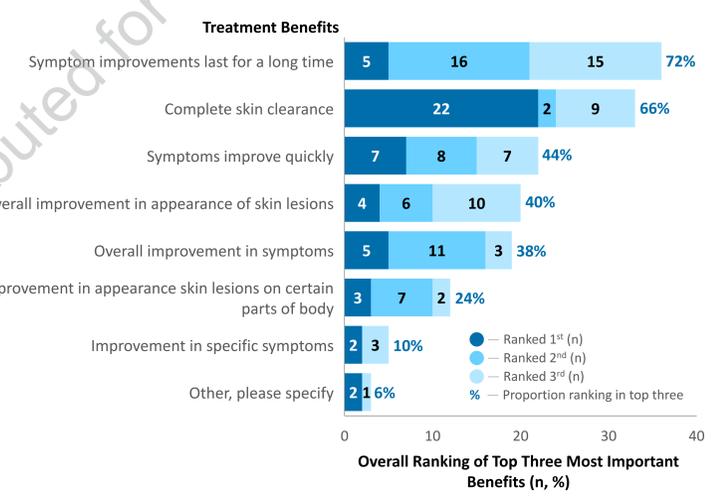


Figure 3. Participants' Reported Reasons for Switching Treatment (n=37)



Among those with prior treatment experience, the most frequently reported reasons for switching from the prior treatment to a new treatment were related to seeking a more effective treatment (**Figure 3**).

Symptom Patterns

Experience of psoriasis symptoms was not consistent over time. Of those asked (n=37), 51% of participants described symptom occurrence as "flares," 30% described cyclical symptom patterns, and 22% characterized psoriasis symptoms as unpredictable.

It returns cyclically. After summer, there is, boom, there is this flare up again. We can say that there is a moment of slight remission in the summer, but with the advent of autumn after summer, I start wearing trousers again, I start covering up more again. — Pt in Italy

[...] when I was a little bit stressed, or there was things going on, in my personal life or family situations, it would flare up again. — Pt in Australia

Treatment Benefits

Overall, the most important elements of efficacy to participants were long-lasting symptom improvement (n=36, 72%), complete skin clearance (n=33, 66%), and symptom improvement quickly (n=22, 44%) (**Figure 4**).

So, I picked [...] symptom improvements last for a long time] because I want long lasting symptom improvement so that it makes me comfortable. — Pt in US

Yes, because from my understanding, [complete skin clearance] the healing itself is naturally the most important. After healing comes the duration of symptom relief. And finally, if all that is working, then the appearance is improved. — Pt in Germany

Treatment Adherence

Participants with prior experience using oral treatments were less likely to report adherence-related challenges (45%) than those using topical therapies (73%) or injection/infusion treatments (57%).

With the injectable treatment, yes, because I regularly forget to order it in time. With regards to the topical treatment, partly, yes. — Pt in France

Yes, I've definitely had times when I got fed up. Yes, with the injections, I didn't want to do them anymore at one point. Now I inject into my thighs, which is better. In the beginning, I think the injections were more frequent. They also left a lot of marks, sometimes little lumps under the skin. Sometimes I had to inject into my belly. So yes, when I had reactions, those little lumps under the skin, that really annoyed me. I wanted to stop. — Pt in France

...there were times where I forgot to apply skin cream [...] I'm less apt to forget to take my current medication just because as soon as it gets delivered, I just almost take it automatically or the next day. But [...] it can be a little bit harder because there's more logistics of carrying around injectable medication and storing it and stuff like that. — Pt in Canada

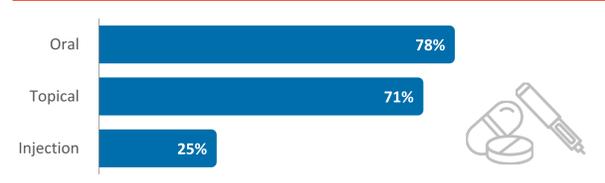
Key Takeaways

- Patients continue to experience substantial disease burden despite treatment, with persistent itch across areas affected by psoriasis and unpredictable or cyclical symptoms being major challenges.
- Many patients report that current therapies do not meet their needs: they prioritize long-lasting symptom relief and complete skin clearance.
- Despite various therapies, treatment burden and adherence challenges persist, emphasizing the need for options that fit patients' daily lives and priorities.

Treatment Expectations

Participants indicated that their expectations for efficacy were not met by one or more of their current treatments (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Unmet Expectations by Treatment Types



Yeah, I guess so. It [oral treatment] has improved all my psoriasis at least a little bit. Just not on my back. Medication will work every place but one spot. — Pt in US

I find the cream that I'm using at the moment is overly thick and not easily absorbed and it's not giving me the immediate comfort or relief from the itchiness or the redness. — Pt in Australia

Yes, my skin cleared up almost completely. I still have a few areas that I can't seem to eliminate, but otherwise, it has cleared up nicely. I achieved a satisfactory benefit from it [injection treatment] for my skin. — Pt in Japan

Conclusions

- Despite broad treatment availability, psoriasis remains a chronic and symptomatic condition for many patients.
- Individuals receiving therapy frequently report fluctuating symptoms, unpredictable disease control, contributing to substantial burden of disease.
- For many patients living with psoriasis treatment burden and adherence challenges remain.
- These findings underscore the need for treatment approaches that more closely align with patients lived experiences, expectations, and treatment priorities, to optimize outcomes.

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