



Fact Sheet

Psoriasis Uncovered Survey

Methodology¹

Abbott, supported by the Southland Psoriasis Association, undertook a survey to reveal the impact of living with the chronic auto-immune disease psoriasis.

The Psoriasis Uncovered survey was based on a sample size of 308 participants who completed an anonymous questionnaire either on paper or online over an eight week period (31st October 2011 - 16th December 2011).

People living with psoriasis were invited to participate in the survey via information available in dermatology clinics, the Southland Psoriasis Association, a link on the DermNet website, and advertisements in metro newspapers.

Survey Objective

To assess the impact of living with psoriasis in New Zealand in order to understand and document the needs of people with psoriasis and improve awareness and understanding of one of the most common skin conditions in the world.

Survey Results¹

Physical symptoms

- The most common age groups of onset for respondents were between the ages of 16 and 20 years old (19%) and after the age of 40 (18%)
- 59% of respondents reported that during a flare-up, more than 10% of their body is covered with psoriasis
- More than 10% of respondents have been admitted to hospital due to their psoriasis

Psychosocial impact

- Psoriasis presents a strong psychosocial burden affecting multiple facets of a person's life. Of all respondents 77% said they hide their psoriasis from other people. Of those respondents:
 - Almost all (94%) said they hide their psoriasis from the public or people they don't know
 - Sadly, almost half of those even try to hide their condition from their extended family (46%) and a quarter hide it from their own children (25%)
 - Embarrassment is the leading reason why respondents said they hide their psoriasis (82%), while 43% put it down to a fear of being judged and 33% to a fear of discrimination
- More than a third (38%) of all respondents don't believe the community understand psoriasis

Career choice and wages

- Of those respondents in paid employment, 19% reported having been prevented from taking a job — and women were far more affected than men — men at 10%, women at 25%
 - Of those respondents, almost a third (32%) say psoriasis has stopped them taking a job where they can't cover their body; nearly a quarter of people (24%) didn't take a job because they were worried about catching a disease through skin flaking; and 16% reported that their psoriasis prevented them from taking a personal services job.
- Of those that reported lost wages due to psoriasis, it was significant — an estimated average of \$1,753 lost in the last year

Associated conditions

- Respondents reported having a number of other medical conditions or problems on top of their psoriasis. The most commonly reported additional medical conditions by New Zealanders with psoriasis included:
 - Stress (35%)
 - Weight problems (29%)
 - Joint pain (28%)
 - Psoriatic arthritis (chronic inflammation of the joints) (26%)
 - Anxiety (24%)
 - High blood pressure (21%)
 - High cholesterol (21%)
 - Fatigue (21%)
 - Depression (18%)
- Less than half (39%) of those who reported having one or more associated conditions are taking active measures to manage them

Information needs

- For the best information on psoriasis, survey respondents ranked their GP the highest (48%), closely followed by internet websites (38%)
- The overall majority (74%) of survey respondents would like more information on psoriasis. Of those respondents:
 - 97% want more information on the latest developments
 - 65% want to know about research findings
 - 33 % want access to medical papers

Treatments

- 40% of respondents reported using phototherapy (light therapy) — either currently or in the past — with the highest number of respondents reporting satisfaction with it (69%)
- 10% of respondents reported using an injectable medication — and only 3% currently use it — but reported it was the second most successful treatment (56% satisfied)
 - In fact, those who had previously used, or are currently using, an injectable medication reported the highest level in the “very satisfied” category (32%)

- The least satisfactory form of treatment according to respondents was herbal or holistic treatments, with 65% of patients dissatisfied with the results. This is closely followed by creams or lotions, as 56% of patients said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the effects.
- 40% say cost prevents them from seeking medical treatment and 28% have cut back on spending to afford medical treatment

About Abbott

Abbott is a global, broad-based health care company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacture and marketing of pharmaceuticals and medical products, including nutritionals, devices and diagnostics. The company employs approximately 91,000 people and markets its products in more than 130 countries. Abbott employs almost 700 people in Australia and New Zealand and has offices located in Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and Wellington.

Reference

1. StollzNow Research, Online Quantitative Research, *Psoriasis Uncovered New Zealand 2011*, October - December 2011.