

How Doctors are Bringing New Life to a Classic Psoriasis Drug

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 24, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Up to 11% of people around the world suffer from a red, flaky, scaly and sometimes itchy rash called psoriasis. While there is no cure for psoriasis, there have been significant improvements in understanding how the immune system and inflammation play a role in psoriasis, and for some, even debilitating psoriatic joint disease.

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Justin W. Marson, MD

Our understanding of these mechanisms has fueled the creation of new drugs to control psoriasis. One of these prescription drugs is apremilast, a pill that received FDA approval in 2014 for the treatment of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. In 2019, because of its unique safety profile and proven efficacy, apremilast received additional FDA approval for the treatment of Behcet’s disease, a condition that can cause ulcers in the eye, mouth, and

genitals. Since then, dermatologists have investigated other diseases apremilast may treat. A new study in SKIN, the Journal of Cutaneous Medicine, reviewed these studies to determine the new ways dermatologists are using this classic drug.

Justin W. Marson, MD, lead author on the study found two overarching novel uses for apremilast: 1) using it in combination with other FDA-approved medications to treat more resistant cases of psoriasis and its associated arthritis and 2) to treat other inflammatory skin diseases.

For patients with severe psoriasis that didn’t sufficiently improve with injectable prescription medications, addition of apremilast improved control of the severity of patient’s psoriasis by an additional 31.8-77.4%. Additionally, the authors found apremilast also provided further improvement in pre-existing joint disease when combined with a patient’s prior drug regimen. The authors noted these symptoms often resolved on their own and that there were no serious side effects or infections as a result of adding apremilast.

The authors also found 57 unique studies and publications that looked at more than 12 distinct skin conditions, ranging from hair loss to disease that cause a loss of skin pigmentation (vitiligo) to forms of lupus and even rosacea. “Not only does apremilast have a reliable safety profile, but newer data suggest it could be very effective for a broad range of inflammatory skin conditions,” says Dr. Marson. “Furthermore, all the benefits are packaged into a twice-a-day pill, which may

be preferable for patients averse to injections.”

The authors conclude that, while future studies will help solidify the use and efficacy of apremilast for off-label conditions, the combination of its safety and efficacy make it a potentially unique choice for a wide range of skin conditions.

SKIN: The Journal of Cutaneous Medicine® is a peer-reviewed online medical journal that is the official journal of The National Society for Cutaneous Medicine. The mission of SKIN is to provide an enhanced and accelerated route to disseminate new dermatologic knowledge for all aspects of cutaneous disease.

For more details please visit www.jofskin.org or contact jofskin@gmail.com.

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