



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF PSORIASIS ASSOCIATIONS

# A Patient Guide to using The EuroGuiDerm Guideline for the Systemic Treatment of Psoriasis Vulgaris

by the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA)

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## Introduction:

### What is the Treatment guideline for Psoriasis and why is it important?

Treatment guidelines are important tools designed to improve quality of care for people living with psoriasis and psoriatic disease. Standard treatment guidelines use the highest standard in evidence and expert assessment to give you good advice about treatments used in clinical practice. In addition to these guidelines it is always important to talk about the best treatment approaches for joint healthcare decision-making.<sup>(1)</sup>

The guideline applies to:

- People living with moderate to severe psoriasis vulgaris
- The caregivers, family and friends who support them
- Psoriasis patient experts and advocates
- Healthcare providers

To best use the guideline, it is also recommended that health care practitioners be given sufficient time to discuss their proposed treatment approach with patients during consultations.<sup>(2)</sup> More Information can be found in the IFPA patient guide under: [www.ifpa-pso.com](http://www.ifpa-pso.com)

The patient guide in your care is provided in two sections:

1. [Joint Q & A](#)
2. [Checklist for your clinical experience](#)

### [Section 1](#)

#### Joint Q & A

This joint Q&A section provides an overview of topics and key questions you may have. Remember that these responses may not be exhaustive! We strongly recommend working closely with your care provider to select the best treatment for you.

1. [What information is contained in the guideline?](#)

The guide contains information about different kinds of treatment including conventional systemic treatment, biologic therapies, and biosimilars. It also offers guidance for specific comorbidities and clinical situations such as pregnancy and vaccinations.

2. [Can I talk to my healthcare provider about information in the guideline?](#)

We hope that you will! Whether you are visiting a dermatologist, primary care provider, or other specialist, we encourage you to build an informed patient-provider relationship using the [EuroGuiderm guidelines website](#) as a reference. Propose an in-depth conversation during consultation and care visits. Your doctor is interested in your concerns and overall

health improvement.

Julia-Tatjana Maul MD, and consultant in the Department of Dermatology at the University Hospital Zurich *recommends that patients inform themselves using the EuroGuiDerm Psoriasis Guideline or other resources such as [patient leaflets](#) about Biologics and Psoriasis Treatment from the EADV<sup>(3)</sup>. These are written more from a patient's perspective and are less scientific.*

3. [What about treatment options such as biologic agents? When can I start on biologics?](#)

Biologics are protein-based drugs, which target specific immune mediators and are approved for the treatment of Pso/PsA (psoriatic disease). With the introduction of biologic medications, we now have more treatment options, and there has been proven improvement in quality of life of patients <sup>(4)</sup>.

The best care may vary among individual patients. Discuss your treatment options with your dermatologist and find out what the best-recommended care looks like for you.

4. [What about biosimilars and newer treatments?](#)

Biosimilars are mimic products that can be generated after licensed biologic also called an 'originator' loses its patent protection. As the generation of biosimilars lacks the enormous development costs, they are often more affordable than their originator. To obtain the approval for all indications of the originator, biosimilars have to perform clinical phase 3 trials in the first licensed indication of the originator only.

In its [position paper on biosimilars](#), the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA) welcomes the introduction of safe and effective biosimilars that can improve access to treatment options<sup>(5)</sup>. However, as always, IFPA emphasizes the importance of the patient-provider relationship in making individual decisions to switch from an originator to a biosimilar.

5. [Which Health Care Provider should I talk to about comorbidities?](#)

All healthcare professionals involved in your care, including your dermatologist, should be aware of psoriasis and its comorbidities <sup>(6)</sup>. The guideline has information on the management of psoriasis-associated conditions such as: psoriatic arthritis, mental health conditions, inflammatory bowel disease, diabetes and heart diseases.

Inform your treatment team about any other health conditions you experience. They will assist in timely screening, diagnosis and referrals to the appropriate specialists.

6. [If I am pregnant, breastfeeding, or I desire to be pregnant: what are my treatment options?](#)

Like many other chronic illnesses, special consideration is taken [in your treatment plan](#) when you plan to get pregnant, during pregnancy, and while breastfeeding<sup>(7)</sup>. Besides talking to your dermatologist, it may help to talk to your gynecologist as well.

7. [What does the guideline recommend about vaccinations while on treatment for Psoriasis?](#)

Before you get your annual or seasonal vaccinations always talk to your dermatologist.

Here is what Julia-Tatjana Maul, MD, recommends based on evidence about vaccines and treatment of patients with psoriasis vulgaris.

*‘Psoriasis on its own should not be considered a reason to deviate from standard vaccination recommendations. In psoriasis patients, vaccination using dead vaccines and live vaccines can be performed at any time, unless a systemic treatment is given that necessitates a different strategy. However, before initiating a systemic treatment, vaccination status should be checked and completed. The seasonal flu vaccination is particularly recommended and national recommendations for vaccination should be followed. The use of live vaccines when being treated with a systemic anti-psoriatic treatment needs to be discussed with your doctor at the time point of vaccination and duration of treatment’.*

8. [What should I know about use of psoriasis medication if I have another bacterial/viral infection or during outbreaks?](#)

Dr. Maul suggests contacting your doctor when having a bacterial or viral infection and discuss with your doctor on an individual basis if your anti-psoriatic treatments need to be stopped or paused. The guidelines also provide recommendation to your dermatologist concerning COVID-19 caused by the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).

9. [Are my perspectives on treatment relevant? What about patient experience?](#)

Yes! It is important that your experience as a patient and your perspectives on treatment be taken into consideration. In fact, your perspective is so important that two measures have been developed to record your perspective during clinical consultations: Patient Reported Outcome Measure (PROMs) and Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs).

PROMs offer a valid and reliable description of your health status from your own perspective and PREMs report your satisfaction with treatment while complementing guidelines beyond clinical care <sup>(8)</sup>.

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## Section 2

### Checklist for your clinical experience

The checklist below is designed to improve your experience with clinical treatment. These simple tips will help you collect the important information you should share with your doctor so that he or she can recommend the best treatment plan for you.

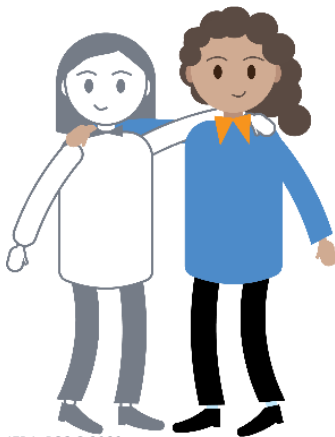
#### Getting ready to visit the doctor:

#### What information do I take with me for the visit?

- Arrange permission for your doctor to access your medical records
- Write a list of the medications and supplements that you take. Bring your medication and supplements with you to the visit.
- Take note of any recent health-related changes you have noticed to keep your doctor up to date.
- Bring a list of questions for your health care provider to make sure you don't forget anything



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#### Should I bring someone with me?

You might want to bring someone with you for moral support and to help you remember information from your visit. This could be family member or friend. Be selective about who you invite to your visit.

- Let them know in good time of the visit. They could also stay in the waiting room for part of the appointment.
- You can ask them to take notes during the visit. This is a great way to remember what was said. Remember that discussion is important between you and your doctor.

#### What tests or screenings should I have?



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Tests and screenings may be different for each patient. Your health care provider will work with you to assess any other symptoms.

- Have you experienced any other symptoms? What happened and when?
- Do I need further testing or screening for comorbidities?
- Where will the tests be done? How long they will take? When are results expected?

## What about treatment and other clinic visits?

- Share your concerns. You and your health care provider can work together with other clinicians or with a team of experts to ensure holistic care.
- Request to know which specialist will be consulted to manage a psoriasis-related condition
- Is there something I need to do or prepare for my next visit?

### After your visit:



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## Who will talk with me about the next steps?

- Besides talking to experts who else can I talk to (Nutritionist, Physiotherapist)
- Are there other patient advocates that can be helpful as you search for the best care for you?
- Are there patient associations and support groups that specialize in this kind of support?

The [International Federation of Psoriasis Associations](#) strongly believes that the best way to find information and further resources is to get connected to a patient association. Our priority is to connect members in Europe and around the world Visit: IFPA's [members page](#) for a list of member associations. See link here: <https://ifpa-pso.com/>

We encourage you to contact local associations for support in living with psoriasis. Many thanks to our member; the European Federation of Psoriasis Patient Associations ([EUROPSO](#))

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## Brief description about IFPA

The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA) is a non-profit organization uniting national and regional psoriasis associations from around the globe. At IFPA, we envision a world without suffering from psoriasis. To achieve this, we focus on empowering our members, improving living conditions for people living with psoriasis and raising awareness.

Find out more about World Psoriasis Day, an IFPA promoted annual advocacy campaign where members and supporters organize activities to raise awareness on psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

Visit: <https://ifpa-pso.com>





To be included in other sections as seen necessary.

## Appreciation

We appreciate the efforts made by the EuroGuiDerm Team/ European Dermatology Forum (EDF) to include patient representation from EUROPSO and IFPA. Through this collaboration the values and needs of people living with psoriasis are reflected in the guideline and were communicated in making the standards of this guideline inclusive.

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