

Your step-by-step guide

to make the most of your Dermatologist appointment

Since your Dermatologist plays such an important part in managing your condition, it is vital to ensure that the crucial moments spent with him/her are fruitful. Most people arrive at their appointments without having given a thought as to what they would say or about what direction the conversation would flow. This leads to the feeling of dissatisfaction and will directly result in inability to manage the disease effectively.

If you want to make the most of the appointment with your Dermatologist, **all you need to do is follow these 3 simple steps:**

Step 1

Be prepared



Step 2

Speak up



Step 3

Act



Step 1

Be prepared

Before your appointment

Just as you prepare for an exam, it is advisable that you put in a bit of preparation before your visit too (without the stress of having to appear for an exam, of course).

A few important pointers to help you analyse your condition and get started:

Read-up



Taking the time to educate yourself about your condition is a highly rewarding process. Think of it as an investment that you are making to improve your health. Reading simple information from credible sources will suffice.

Read-up about your condition, commonly experienced symptoms, various treatment options and lifestyle modifications that you may need to make.

Write down



Making a note of important points that you read and those that relate to you will help your Dermatologist connect the dots, prescribe treatment options best suited to your needs.

You would also benefit if you write down how your disease is impacting your daily life. Remember to examine the impact of Psoriasis on all aspects of life like physical, emotional and social. You can do this easily by checking the impact that Psoriasis has on your life using the Dermatology Life Quality Index tool (DLQI).

Keeping a track of your symptoms, flare-ups and their impact will help you monitor long term effectiveness of your treatment.



Plan ahead

Just as any project that you undertake, your upcoming appointments also need planning. Here are a few things you need to plan for:

Appointment goals: Ask yourself if you want to discuss any particular symptom or treatment with your Dermatologist and plan your discussion around it

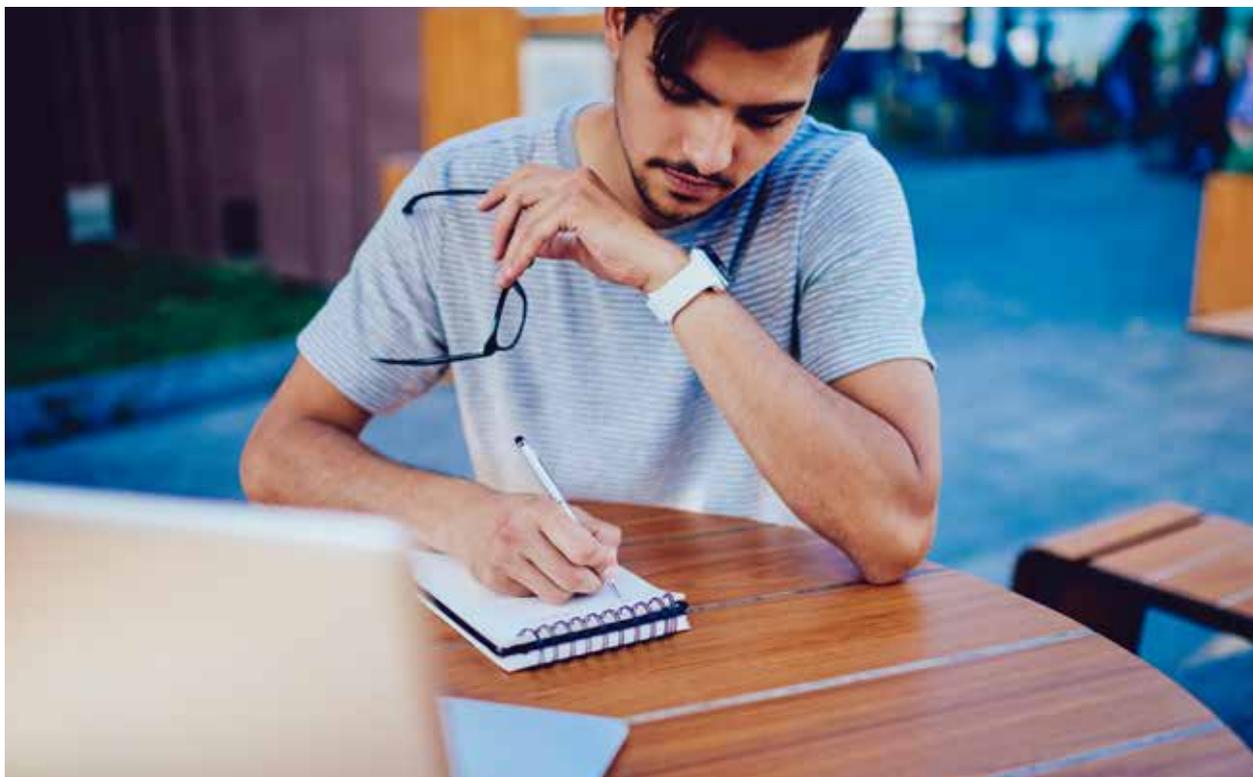
Treatment goals: Ask yourself what do you expect from your treatment (for example; clear skin)

Remember, planning is a process that requires both knowledge and practicality. Discuss your plans with your Dermatologist for best outcomes.



Expect questions

It is important for you to remember that no one knows you better than yourself. Be open to answering the questions posed by your Dermatologist. Remember, he/she has your interest at heart.



Here are some questions to ponder over before your appointment



1. How severe is my Psoriasis? Where is it located?
2. What type of Psoriasis do I have?
3. Do I know what are my Psoriasis triggers?
4. What medications am I currently taking for Psoriasis?
5. Do I have any other diseases or illnesses? Am I taking any medications for these?
6. Do I suffer from joint pains?
7. Am I planning to start a family? Will my condition and treatment impact my chances of conception?

Spend some time thinking about these questions. The answers to these will provide you with an inherent knowledge of your unique Psoriasis and will help you Unhide!

Handy hints

Things you need to carry with you for the appointment

- Your current medical file.
- Current list of medications.
- List of products used for skin care routines.
- A copy of your symptom tracker and Dermatology Life Quality Index score duly filled.
- Your notes.

It is important that you arrive a little before your fixed appointment time to help you recall your thoughts and be prepared for a conversation with your Dermatologist.

Step 2

Speak up

During your appointment

Your appointment is the best time to build up a partnership with your Dermatologist. Here are a few tips to help you 'speak up':

Breathe before you begin



It is understandable if you feel a twinge of nervousness before you begin. A deep breath can help you feel more in control and confident of yourself.

Be precise



A healthy two-way communication happens when you have a well-thought of structure to your conversation. Writing down your thoughts, goals and questions will help. Prioritising your questions is a good idea.

Answering questions precisely is also important to enable your Dermatologist to determine how your treatment is working for you and how to plan your future treatment. Accurate answers will help save time and allow you to make the best of the limited time.

Write down



Noting down answers to your questions will help you apply the information you've received to manage your condition better.

Discuss your treatment goals and options



If you have spent time reading up about various treatment options, you can be an active participant in the treatment-related decision-making process. Knowledge about treatment will enable you to ask precise questions and get precise answers in turn. Remember, it is good to discuss your treatment goals and choices with your Dermatologist. **An informed choice is always the best choice.**

Here are a few questions about treatment options to guide your conversation:



1. How effective is this treatment for my type of Psoriasis?
2. How soon can I see the results? (Define results as per your pre-set treatment goals)
3. Are there any risks or drawbacks about this treatment that I should know of?
4. How likely is it that I will develop side effects?
5. How should I monitor this treatment? Are there any tests that need to be done prior to starting?
6. How long should I continue this treatment?
7. Can I continue this treatment if I am pregnant or planning to get pregnant?

Be frank



It is important that you have an honest conversation with your Dermatologist about all aspects of your condition, symptoms, treatment and its impact on your life. Remember, both you and your Dermatologist have to work together if you want to manage your condition better.

Do not be afraid to ask or answer questions and clear doubts. Remember, managing your condition is a two-way street. Your Dermatologist can only treat what is revealed to him/her.

Handy hints

Before you leave, check with your Dermatologist about

- Tentative date of your next visit
- Treatment prescription
- Prescription for routine tests

Although your visit would be limited to approximately 15 to 20 minutes, it is important that you come away feeling confident that together you and your Dermatologist are doing the best that can be done to handle your condition well.

After your appointment

Although your appointment with your Dermatologist is done (until the next visit), your journey with Psoriasis is ongoing. The next step after planning and meeting your Dermatologist is 'to act'.

To elaborate, 'Act' means:

- Acknowledging your feelings about the appointment
- Working to adhere to the prescriptions:
 - Ensure that you are taking the treatment prescribed at the recommended intervals
 - Modifying your lifestyle to manage your condition better
- Continued tracking and monitoring of symptoms to ascertain if your treatment is working for you
- Continued reading up about your condition
- Taking help and support from family and friends to manage your condition better
- Making notes about questions you would want to ask your Dermatologist at your next visit

Handy hints

Points to remember between two appointments

- Connect with your Dermatologist if you feel your symptoms are worsening or you experience flare-ups. Most Dermatologist will be available for a short chat over a call.
- If you feel that your symptoms are not being resolved, make it a point to take an appointment so that your Dermatologist can examine you and prescribe or change therapy.
- Do not change, stop or delay your treatment without first consulting your Dermatologist.

Follow these 3 steps

Be prepared, Speak Up and Act

to make the most of your
Dermatologist 's visit.

UNHIDE PSORIASIS

