

Systemic Treatments - Oral Medications

Follow your health care provider's directions for use as differing medications have differing dosage regimens.

Medication Common Name (Brand)	What it does	How it's delivered	Dose & Frequency	Monitoring/Follow up	*Common Side Effects
Acitretin (Soriatane®)	Acitretin is a retinoid. It leads to a more normal pattern of growth for skin cells.	Oral capsule	For Severe psoriasis: Starting dose of 25 mg once daily; Maintenance daily dose from 25 mg to 50 mg; maximum daily dose of 75 mg.	Pregnancy tests must be performed before and during treatment and up to 3 years after last dose. Lipid levels and liver function to be checked before and monitored during treatment. Patients should be carefully monitored for visual problems. Bone checks especially in elderly.	Dry lips, dry skin, hair loss, headache, joint pain insomnia, abdominal pain, diarrhea Headache Nausea Vomiting Fragile skin Hair loss Inflamed lips Itching Peeling of Fingertips and skin on body, Redness or Rash Sticky Skin
Apremilast (Otezla®)	Apremilast is an immunosuppressant that reduces the activity of PDE4. This results in less inflammation in the skin and joints.	Oral tablet	The recommended dose is 30 mg twice a day. When first starting, the dose needs to be increased gradually; see dosing table from product monograph and doctor's instructions should be followed	Weight to be monitored regularly. Assessment of kidney function is recommended prior to initiation of treatment.	Diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, upper respiratory tract infection (e.g. common cold), flu (body aches and pains, tiredness, fever), decreased appetite, abdominal discomfort, indigestion, fatigue, trouble sleeping, back pain, dizziness, depression, weight loss

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Cyclosporine (several)	Cyclosporine is an immunosuppressant that suppresses certain function of your immune system to treat psoriasis	Oral in liquid, pill or capsule form	Daily in two divided doses, recommended initial dose is 2.5 mg/kg/day given in two divided oral doses, 12 hours apart. If no improvement after 1 month, daily dose may be gradually increased. Dose adjustments should be made in increments of 0.5 to 1.0 mg/kg/day body weight per month and total daily dose, depending on monitoring of drug tolerance, should not exceed 5 mg/kg/day.	Pre-treatment physical examination to include blood pressure, renal function and careful examination for tumours, particularly of the skin, to establish accurate baseline values and clinical status. Renal function and blood pressure monitoring during treatment.	Headache, high blood pressure, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, muscle cramps, high cholesterol, fatigue, flu-like symptoms. Kidney or liver problems; loss of appetite, acne or oily skin; slight trembling of the hands; increased growth of fine hairs on the body; muscle or joint pains or cramping; weakness, anxiety; tingling in the fingers, toes or mouth; night sweats; hearing loss; swelling of the face; increased potassium in the body, decreased ability to fight infection low level of white blood cells high level of sugar in the blood hot flushes ,stomach ulcer, rash
Methotrexate (several)	Methotrexate is an anti-metabolite and antirheumatic. Methotrexate blocks an enzyme needed by body cells to live. This interferes with the growth of some cells, such as rapidly growing skin cells in psoriasis.	Oral in pill form	Once weekly or divided and taken 3 times at 12-hour intervals. Schedule may be gradually adjusted to achieve optimal clinical response; 30 mg/week should not ordinarily be exceeded. As directed by doctor's instructions for optimal dosing.	Prior to treatment, clinical and laboratory evaluation should be done to evaluate preexisting hepatitis virus B and hepatitis virus C infection. Not recommended for patients with active or chronic hepatitis B or C infection. Liver damage and function tests should be performed several times prior to dosing. Periodic liver biopsies are usually recommended for psoriatic patients undergoing long-term treatment.	Upset stomach, stomach pain, vomiting, nausea, loss of appetite, dizziness, chills and fever, diarrhea or sores on lips or mouth. A fall in the number of white blood cells. This may reduce resistance to infection and increase chances of cold sores, blood poisoning or swelling of blood vessels. Tiredness (fatigue).

Information is from the full product monograph or consumer information for each listed medication. *This chart does not provide a complete list of possible side effects. For more detailed information refer to the Product Monograph- Adverse Reactions or Consumer information insert for warnings, precautions and other considerations for each treatment “