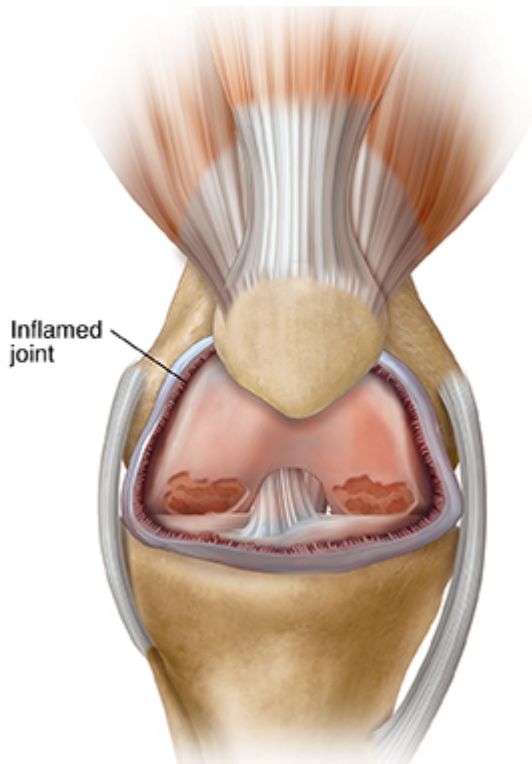


# Understanding Psoriatic Arthritis

Psoriatic arthritis is joint pain and swelling that occurs in some people who have psoriasis. Psoriasis is a skin disease that causes scaly skin patches. People who have psoriasis may develop psoriatic arthritis later. In some cases, psoriatic arthritis develops before psoriasis.



## How to say it

sor-ee-A-tik arthritis

## What causes psoriatic arthritis?

Doctors don't know the exact cause of psoriatic arthritis. But it's linked to problems with the body's infection-fighting system (immune system). Other factors include:

- Family history. People who have psoriatic arthritis often have relatives with either psoriasis or arthritis, or both.
- Certain infections. These include strep infections and HIV.
- Environment. Stress, injury to skin, and certain medicines may trigger psoriasis to become active.

## What are the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis?

Symptoms may include:

- Pain, tenderness, and swelling in any joint, including the spine
- Joint or back stiffness, especially in the morning

- Patches of rough skin that are usually red underneath and scaly and white or silver on top
- Fingernail problems, such as pitted, or crumbly nails, or nails that are detached from the nail bed
- Pain and swelling where muscles attach to bones
- Swelling of fingers or toes
- Eye redness or inflammation

## How is psoriatic arthritis treated?

Psoriatic arthritis doesn't go away. It's a long-term (chronic) condition that needs long-term treatment. Medicines are an important part of treatment. These medicines are often used:

- Prescription or over-the-counter pain medicines to help reduce swelling and pain
- Prescription medicines that limit the effect of the immune system. They may reduce or prevent joint damage. Methotrexate is a pill commonly used. Biologic and targeted synthetic medicines and skin patches may also be used to treat psoriatic arthritis.
- Steroid injections in affected joints to help ease symptoms
- Topical medicines for rough skin patches to ease discomfort and dryness

In addition to medicines, these treatments may be recommended:

- Regular exercise to improve flexibility and strength
- Physical therapy to help ease pain and improve flexibility
- Heat packs to help ease pain and swelling
- Shoe inserts to keep your feet and ankles stable, and to help with foot pain

## What are the complications of psoriatic arthritis?

Possible complications include:

- Joint damage that gets worse
- Reduced ability to use affected joints

## When should I call my healthcare provider?

Call your healthcare provider right away if any of the following occur:

- You have a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- You have pain that gets worse
- You have symptoms that don't get better, or symptoms that get worse

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- You develop new symptoms