

Mayo Clinic Minute: Psoriasis of the scalp

Psoriasis is a skin disorder affecting 2% to 3% of the population. Symptoms can range from mild to severe with debilitating flareups that cause itchiness and discomfort.

[Dr. Dawn Davis](#), a dermatologist at Mayo Clinic, says psoriasis is a multisystem inflammatory disorder primarily affecting the skin. She says psoriasis is inherited, and more people might have genes that make them more likely to develop the condition. It can affect any part of the body, including the scalp.

	Everyone has experienced an itchy scalp at times. Mayo Clinic's Dr. Dawn Davis says it's different for those with psoriasis.
Dawn Davis, M.D. Dermatology Mayo Clinic	"Oftentimes patients will have scales on their skin on their scalp that itches or kind of stings when they go to shampoo their scalp, and they just assume that it's really bad dandruff."
	She says psoriasis is thought to be an immune system issue that results in faster-than-normal growth of skin cells.
	"Typically, skin will grow and shed in 28-to-30-day cycles, but psoriasis skin grows and tries to shed in a 72-hour cycle. It's almost growing 10 times the speed of normal skin."
	There is no cure for psoriasis, but there are treatments.
	"The treatments we use for psoriasis help decrease the inflammation in the skin and turn off that cell cascade of the immune system."
	Dr. Davis says maintaining a healthy weight and avoiding tobacco and excess alcohol can help to decrease the severity of psoriasis.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.