What to Ask Your Doctor About Changing/Escalating Your Psoriasis Treatment

The most critical questions to discuss with your doctor when changing/escalating your psoriasis treatment.

If you’re noticing new or worsening symptoms, it may be time to escalate or change your psoriasis treatment. Clear communication between you and your doctor can help you successfully determine the right next steps through a process called “shared decision making.”

This means talking to your doctor about the medications used to treat your psoriasis — including the benefits and risks of the options and how those fit into your treatment goals and preferences — in an effort to decide on a treatment path forward, together.

An important part of shared decision making is asking your doctor the right questions. Use this list below as a starting point, and add notes as you go, to ensure you get the information and support you need to take care of your psoriasis and feel your best.

1. What triggers a medication switch?
Talk to your doctor about red flags and symptoms you should look for and bring up at appointments. Ask about the pros and cons of switching therapies.
2. What are the different treatment options available to me?
Ask your doctor what they recommend, and why, and share your preferences too.

3. How might this medication help me?
Be sure you understand what the drug is designed to do and how likely it is (or isn't) that it will have a beneficial impact on your health.

4. What are the side effects?
You may ask about the mild or serious side effects associated with the medication, including what you can expect, how to best prepare, and when to follow-up with your health care provider.

5. What outcomes should I expect?
Ask your doctor how long this medication typically takes to work, and how you will know if it is working, including what symptoms to pay attention to.
6. What is the logistics of taking this medication?
Ask your doctor about how you will take the medication (is it a pill, injection, infusion), about the dosing schedule, how often you need blood work or additional monitoring, and how you order your medication (for example, via a specialty pharmacy).

7. What support is available to me?
Ask your doctor about what support programs are available to you if you have any questions or concerns. If your drug is prescribed through a specialty pharmacy, you may also inquire about their specific patient services.

8. What other treatments outside of this medication should I be focused on?
Ask your doctor about what lifestyle changes can help with psoriasis, and address concerns about fatigue, mental health, and sexual health.