SHORT CONTACT THERAPY
A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS WITH PSORIASIS
Dithrocream is one of the most effective methods of achieving clearance of psoriasis patches. Application of Dithrocream for short-contact periods of just 30 minutes each day has been shown to be highly successful for many patients.

DITHROCREAM MAY CAUSE TEMPORARY STAINING OF THE SKIN AND A BURNING SENSATION IF USED INAPPROPRIATELY.

For best results read these guidelines before commencing treatment.

The following is not the complete patient information.
Always read the label before applying Dithrocream.
To open the tube, unscrew the cap and invert to pierce membrane.

For short-contact therapy, Dithrocream should be applied once a day and left on for only 30 minutes. You may find it helpful to time the application so that you put it on half an hour before your usual shower or bathtime.

A small amount of cream should be rubbed accurately into the areas of psoriasis until the cream is absorbed. Try to avoid the surrounding normal skin. Wash hands thoroughly after use. To avoid staining of clothes or chairs, you could wear an old dressing gown. Dithrocream should not be used on the face, and should be used with care, and only on doctor’s advice, on the following areas: under arms, under breasts, between legs or buttocks, groin and the tummy-button!

After 30 minutes the cream should be washed off by showering or bathing. Use your usual soap or shower gel.
For use on the scalp, first comb hair to remove loose scales and, after suitably parting, rub the cream well into the affected areas. Remove cream by shampooing the hair after 30 minutes, and try to avoid the rinse water going into the eyes.

Blonde or fair hair may take on a pinkish tinge, but this will grow out after the treatment stops.

Although Dithrocream may be expected to produce a mild local sensation of warmth, if the treatment produces burning or excessive soreness, or if the lesions spread, reduce frequency of application and in extreme cases stop treatment and consult your doctor.

The above instructions should be repeated once a day until the skin is entirely 'clear' — that is, when there is nothing to feel with the fingers and the texture is normal. A period of 4 to 6 weeks' treatment may be necessary to achieve this clearance.

The treated areas of skin may gradually become stained purple or brown. This colouration, which is harmless, will gradually disappear within a few days after the end of your treatment. You should not attempt to scrub the colour from your skin.

If after a week your psoriasis does not seem to have improved DO NOT DESPAIR! It is possible that you may need a different strength of Dithrocream, and you should
consult your doctor on this subject. Providing the treated areas tolerate Dithrocream, it should be possible to clear psoriasis patches within 4 to 6 weeks by gradually increasing the strength of cream applied. There are 5 strengths of Dithrocream:

- **Strength: 0.1%**
  - Pack colour: Pale Blue
- **Strength: 0.25%**
  - Pack colour: Red
- **Strength: 0.5%**
  - Pack colour: Purple
- **Strength: 1.0%**
  - Pack colour: Brown
- **Strength: 2.0%**
  - Pack colour: Yellow

It may be necessary, and is perfectly acceptable, to use differing Dithrocream strengths on differing areas of the body — eg lower strengths (0.1% or 0.25%) are normally recommended for more tender sites. If in doubt, ask your doctor.

N.B. Only one prescription charge is payable if two or more different strengths of Dithrocream are supplied on the same NHS prescription form.

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**Some Do’s and Don’ts**

- **DO** keep the cream away from the eyes and wash your hands after use.
- **DO** keep the cream away from fabrics, plastics and other materials as it may cause staining.
- **DO** rinse the shower/bath with hot water immediately after showering/washing the Dithrocream off, and use a suitable cleaner to remove anydeposit on the shower/bath surfaces.
- **DON’T** give up if you do not see immediate results — using Dithrocream is one of the most effective methods of ensuring long-term remission of your psoriasis.
- **DON’T** use Dithrocream on very sore, angry looking psoriasis. If treated areas become inflamed, reduce the frequency of Dithrocream application, or if necessary consult your doctor.
Psoriasis is a fairly common skin disorder which affects about 2-3% of the population. It occurs equally in men and women and can affect people at any age.

There are certain times in life when the tendency to develop psoriasis is increased. Children with a family history of psoriasis may well develop the condition at puberty. Women may find that their psoriasis becomes less noticeable during pregnancy, but that it flares up again soon after childbirth. Women are also more prone at or after the menopause.

The skin is a complex organ consisting of various layers of different types of cells.

Cells in the outer layer of the skin gradually change and move towards the surface where they are continuously shed and replaced. The process normally takes between 3 and 4 weeks.

In psoriasis, this rate of turnover is dramatically increased, within a localised area of skin, to as little as 3-4 days. Both live and dead cells arrive at the surface together and accumulate to form the silvery white scales that are characteristic of psoriasis.

Although the lesions are unsightly and may sometimes be embarrassing, the disorder is not catching and, with proper treatment, can be brought under control.
Even though the exact cause of psoriasis is still unknown, it appears that some people are more inclined to develop the disorder than others. Many patients are able to think of someone else in the family who has psoriasis, but it is thought that people with a family history of the disorder only get it themselves if some other factor starts it off.

One of these factors could be a throat infection. Of those patients who first had psoriasis during childhood, half developed the condition after having had a sore throat.

Stress is another factor which could bring about psoriasis for the first time, but it can also be responsible for a relapse later on. It is very important to understand that if you are anxious or under pressure you increase the possibility of developing psoriasis, and you should attempt to control this by understanding that the stress and anxiety are themselves important factors.

In most cases, exposure to sunlight improves the condition but excessive sunburn may actually bring about a relapse. Diet is not thought to have any effect on psoriasis.

Cut down on stress by resting as often as you can. A holiday in the sun can work wonders, but do not overdo it as excessive sunburn can cause the lesions to spread. It is quite common for psoriasis to flare up at the site of an injury, so protect yourself against scratches and cuts when you are handling pets, gardening or doing anything where damage to the skin is likely.
THE 5 STRENGTHS OF DITHROCREAM ARE:

The strength of Dithrocream may need to be gradually increased for best results — consult your doctor.

The Psoriasis Association is a membership organisation providing information, support and advice about psoriasis.

The Psoriasis Association
Dick Coles House
2 Queensbridge
Northampton
NN4 7BF
08456 760 076 (local rate calls)
mail@psoriasis-association.org.uk
www.psoriasis-association.org.uk

Dermal Laboratories Limited, Gosmore, Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7QR
Telephone: (01462) 458866
www.dermal.co.uk

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