“Doctor, can’t you prescribe calcipotriol instead of this steroid tube?” This type of conversation is becoming increasingly frequent in consulting rooms around the world. The internet has opened the gates of privileged medical information to all patients, mostly to their benefit. However, doctors frequently find themselves surprised at the extent of patients’ knowledge about their disease and their keenness to participate in the decision making process about their treatment. In order to be better prepared to deal with such queries from patients, it is necessary to be familiar with some good patient information sites that one can confidently recommend to patients. Familiarity with such patient education sites and even doctor education sites is becoming increasingly important.

Informative websites about psoriasis can be divided into those providing material for doctors and those for patients. Nearly all sites request registration prior to complete access to the site.

**DOCTOR EDUCATION MATERIAL**

   This link leads to the dermatology homepage of Medscape. Registration is necessary but free. This provides access to the latest articles, case studies, research and CME in dermatology. There is a powerful search engine within the site and a search query on psoriasis gives over 100 articles related to the latest in psoriasis diagnosis and therapy.

2) [http://physicians.healthology.com/focus_index.asp?f=skinhealth&b=physicians](http://physicians.healthology.com/focus_index.asp?f=skinhealth&b=physicians)
   This has excellent multimedia streaming video presentations on many topics related to psoriasis. Topics include ‘Getting to psoriasis through the immune system’, ‘Living with psoriasis: Quality of life on treatment’, ‘Patient experience with psoriasis therapies’, and ‘What is remission in psoriasis?’ This site is a ‘must see’ for those having fast internet connections.

   This site is a part of the National Psoriasis Foundation, whose main purpose is to serve people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. To make sure that patients have access to high-quality medical care and support for their diseases, this site provides information, literature and education specifically for medical professionals. The ‘Literature & Courses’ section outlines the informational material and events offered to health care providers. Medical professionals can find details on Psoriasis Foundation sponsored courses, as well as other relevant meetings that are focused on psoriasis. The ‘Help for your Patients’ section describes the educational and support services they
can provide to the doctor and their patients. The site is focussed on U.S. based doctors and patients, but the content is relevant throughout the world.

PATIENT EDUCATION MATERIAL

1) http://www.dermatology.co.uk/psoriasis/index.asp
   This is a comprehensive patient education area. It has links to sections dealing with causes of psoriasis, a reference guide on the latest research in psoriasis, an overview of available treatment modalities and information about a holistic approach to psoriasis treatment. It is an excellent site for an anxious patient who has been recently diagnosed as having psoriasis. Many difficult terminologies such as DNA, streptococcus, etc. have been explained. In the treatment section, standard as well as new latest treatment modalities such as UVB therapy are adequately explained.

2) http://www.skincarephysicians.com/psoriasisnet/whatis.htm
   This is a site that discusses the intricacies of psoriasis without confusing the patient. There are a few patient photographs showing the various types of psoriasis. It has a detailed section on the treatment of psoriasis. The site updates its content regularly to keep up with the latest. Since this is a service provided by the American Association of Dermatologists (AAD), the content is reliable.

   This is a very comprehensive site with lots of information. It divides its information page into four sections: coping, learning, treating and connecting. The abundant information may confuse a newly diagnosed patient especially in the treatment section but the site can be recommended to a patient with difficult psoriasis since it has more information than the rest. The site also has a message board section where one may exchange views with others.

4) http://www.understandingpsoriasis.org/
   Understanding psoriasis is an educational resource that offers people with psoriasis information about the symptoms and causes of psoriasis, control strategies, current treatment options and therapies on the horizon.

5) http://www.skinema.com
   To look at the lighter side of psoriasis, patients can be directed to the above site with a link to a page that discusses a movie based on psoriasis, ’The Singing Detective’ (http://itsb.ucsf.edu/~vcr/SpotSingingDetective.html). The movie has many upsides but one serious flaw. Through his psychotherapy, the lead character suffering with psoriasis opens up and disposes off several closets of emotional baggage. As he reconciles the history of his childhood trauma, his psoriasis clears as well. The obvious message is that psychological stressors directly caused his condition. While stress seems to make psoriasis flare up, blaming the character’s entire condition on a ticked off inner child isn’t correct. Psoriasis can be heart breaking, but heartbreak is not the sole cause of psoriasis.