

Survey reveals heavy disease burden of psoriasis among Filipinos

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- *Filipinos with moderate-to-severe psoriasis experience significant negative impact on their quality of life, psychological and emotional wellbeing, and productivity.*
- *This was revealed by a 2020 survey conducted by patient group Psoriasis Philippines (PsorPhil), which gathered the feedback of 350 of its members.*
- *The survey results will help Novartis work with patient communities, healthcare professionals, and policymakers in easing the heavy burden of psoriatic disease.*

06/21/2022 – Filipinos with moderate-to-severe psoriasis experience significant negative impact on their quality of life, psychological and emotional wellbeing, and productivity. The heavy disease burden of psoriasis was revealed by a 2020 survey conducted by patient group Psoriasis Philippines (PsorPhil), which gathered the feedback of 350 of its members.¹

“We hope that the results of this survey will help raise awareness on psoriatic disease, and inform policymakers, healthcare professionals, and pharmaceutical companies in creating solutions to improve the health care and social inclusion of Filipinos living with psoriasis,” said PsorPhil President Mr. Paul Mendoza.

The Philippine Coalition for Psoriatic Diseases (PCPD) welcomed the release of the PsorPhil survey results. Established in July 2021, PCPD aims to galvanize key stakeholder efforts in promoting awareness of, and enhancing the management of, psoriatic diseases in the country. The coalition is spearheaded by PsorPhil, the Philippine Dermatological Society (PDS), and Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA). Among its supporters from the pharmaceutical industry is Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

“The PsorPhil survey provides invaluable patient insights on their treatment challenges and preferences, which can help us optimize treatment satisfaction, adherence and outcome,” said PDS president Dr. Jojo Rivera.

“We are privileged to be part of the Coalition for Psoriatic Diseases. We and our coalition partners are committed to work with and listen to patients living with psoriatic disease, so that together we can address treatment challenges and improve their quality of life,” said PRA president Dr. Jombi Lichauco.

“The impact of psoriasis is more than skin deep and can have a profound effect on people's physical and emotional wellbeing. The results of this survey will help the private sector work with patient communities, healthcare professionals, employers, and policymakers in easing the heavy burden of psoriatic disease,” said Ms. Christine Fajardo, Patient Engagement Head, Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

Psoriasis is a chronic, non-communicable, painful, disfiguring and disabling disease for which there is no cure and with great negative impact on patients' quality of life. Psoriasis commonly affects the skin and nails. Up to a third of patients with psoriasis have, or will develop, psoriatic arthritis, a condition in which the joints are also affected, causing debilitating symptoms including pain, stiffness, and irreversible joint damage. Psoriasis is also associated with other serious health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease and depression.²

A little over half (51%) of the respondents were employed during the survey, of which 61% reported missing work at least once due to psoriasis. Most respondents with moderate-to-severe psoriasis reported missing work often due to their disease. Almost half of the respondents (45%) have been living with psoriasis for more than 10 years, while 10% were diagnosed with psoriasis within the last year. The most common type of psoriasis among respondents is plaque psoriasis (64%), followed by psoriatic arthritis (30.6%), and guttate psoriasis (30%).

A little over half of the respondents (52.3%) earn less than PHP20,000 a month, a third (34.7%) earn between PHP21,000 to PHP50,000 a month, while only 1 in 10 (10.8%) earn more than 50,000 pesos. Over a third (37.1%) of respondents are unemployed, most of whom rely on their immediate family members such as their partner, parents, siblings, and children to shoulder the cost of their treatments. Some reported getting financial support from government agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Others said they had to take out loans to sustain their psoriasis treatments.

Almost 8 out of 10 (77%) survey respondents reported experiencing depression and 66% anxiety. One of four (27%) had suicidal thoughts, all of whom reported to also having both depression and anxiety. Taken together, 81% had at least one of depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts while half (51%) had both depression and anxiety. Most respondents who reported having depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts had moderate-to-severe psoriasis.

Most (92.3%) reported more than one area with lesions. The most common locations of lesions are the scalp (88.6%), legs (52.3%), arms (70.3%) and back of the trunk (65.4%). Lesions on the arms or feet with nail involvement are more common than lesions without nail involvement. The most common psoriasis treatments used by respondents are topical (71.1%), methotrexate (25.4%), biologics (4%), phototherapy (3.4%), steroids (2.3%) and herbal (2.3%). About 17% reported not taking any treatments for psoriasis.

The most common health condition reported was obesity (26.9%) followed by high blood pressure (22.3%), diabetes (10%), and cancer (1.7%). Among the other health conditions reported by respondents, asthma was the most common.

References:

1. Psoriasis Philippines 2020 Survey, on file
2. [Global Report on Psoriasis](#)

About Psoriasis Philippines (PsorPhil)

PsorPhil represents the interests of the estimated 1 to 2 million Filipinos living with psoriatic diseases. Its core advocacies include promoting awareness on psoriatic diseases and their socioeconomic impact, providing a welcoming and enabling community for its members, linking disadvantaged members to institutions that can provide financial support for their treatment, and working with the government, medical societies, and other stakeholders to safeguard the interests of its members.

About the Philippine Dermatological Society (PDS)

Established in 1952, the PDS is an organization of board-certified dermatologists, doctors who are experts in the field of medicine dedicated to the skin, hair, and nails. Its members are humane and service-oriented

dermatologists who observe the highest ethical and professional standards and are dedicated to promoting knowledge through information dissemination, training, and research.

About the Philippine Rheumatology Association (PRA)

Established in 1964, the PRA is a collegial organization, composed of competent, compassionate, socially responsive, and ethical rheumatologists. It is committed to promoting rheumatology as a specialty, providing quality patient care, advancing education and research in rheumatology, and continuing personal and professional development of its members.

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