



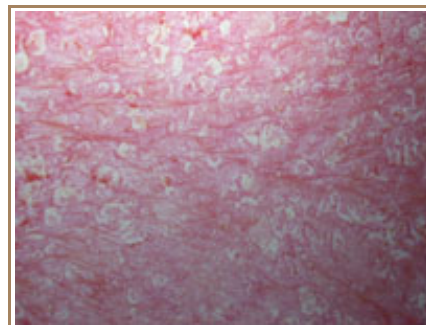
[Authoritative facts](#) about the skin from the [New Zealand Dermatological Society Incorporated](#).

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Erythrodermic psoriasis

[Erythroderma](#) is a generalised redness of the skin. It is a very severe skin condition that can be fatal. It can be the result of many inflammatory skin conditions, drugs and malignancies but in a third of cases it is due to [psoriasis](#).

Erythrodermic psoriasis



Clinical features

Erythrodermic psoriasis usually occurs in the setting of known worsening or unstable psoriasis but may uncommonly be the first presentation of psoriasis.

Erythrodermic psoriasis may be precipitated by:

- Infections
- Low calcium
- Withdrawal of [oral corticosteroids](#) (prednisone)
- Withdrawal of excessive use of strong [topical corticosteroids](#)
- Strong [coal tar](#) preparations
- Certain medications including lithium, [antimalarials](#) and interleukin II

Complications include:

- Dehydration
- Heart failure
- Infection

- Hypothermia
- Protein loss and malnutrition
- Oedema (swelling)
- Death

Treatment

Treatment of erythroderma is similar despite the many underlying causes. Treatment for erythrodermic psoriasis includes:

- Hospitalisation for supportive care including intravenous fluids and temperature regulation
- Bland [emollients](#) and cooling wet dressings
- Bed rest
- Low-dose [methotrexate](#), [ciclosporin](#) or [acitretin](#)
- Treatment of complications (for example antibiotics, diuretics (water tablets), nutritional support)

[Oral corticosteroids](#) should be avoided if possible because withdrawal risks worsening of the erythrodermic state or even [generalised pustular psoriasis](#). However, sometimes they are the only treatment that helps.

Topical tar preparations and [phototherapy](#) should also be avoided in the early treatment of erythrodermic psoriasis as they may worsen the condition.

Related information

References:

On DermNet NZ:

- [General information about psoriasis](#)
- [Guttate psoriasis](#)
- [Chronic plaque psoriasis](#)
- [Scalp psoriasis](#)
- [Flexural psoriasis](#)
- [Nail psoriasis](#)
- [Pustular psoriasis](#)
- [Palmoplantar pustulosis](#)
- [Plamoplantar psoriasis](#)
- [Psoriatic arthritis](#)
- [Treatment of psoriasis](#)

Books about skin diseases:

See the [DermNet NZ bookstore](#)

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DermNet does not provide an on-line consultation service.

If you have any concerns with your skin or its treatment, see a [dermatologist](#) for advice.

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