

Tekst 10

Psoriasis: new treatment

PEOPLE who suffer from psoriasis may soon be able to get rid of their sores by exposing them to a red light, writes Roger Dobson.

More than 40 patients have so far benefited from an experimental technology being developed by dermatologists in Britain. It involves treating patches of skin with a chemical and then exposing them to a special red light.

Eventually, doctors hope to be able to develop a treatment in which sufferers will walk into special light kiosks and have their skin cleared of the characteristic red flaky plaques at the touch of a button.

Psoriasis is an ailment where the surface layer of the skin, the epidermis, is reproduced so quickly that it piles up on itself, forming itchy lumps. When scratched, the skin flakes off, exposing a raw red surface underneath that may bleed.

The precise triggers for psoriasis are not known, although it can run in families and stress is thought to be involved. There is no known cure, but treatments are available, including steroid therapy and a range of homeopathic medicines.

One of the treatments is exposure to ultraviolet light, but this has the risk of side effects such as cancer, or ageing of the skin, particularly when it has to be used repeatedly as the patches return. It is also unable to discriminate between healthy skin and psoriasis plaques.

Dermatologists in Manchester are now working on a photo-sensitive technique that uses ordinary visible red light, similar to that from a red light

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bulb, but which attacks only the areas of skin where there are psoriasis marks.

Chris Griffiths, professor of dermatology at Manchester University and Hope Hospital, says that the psoriasis patches treated on all the patients so far have been eliminated with the technique.

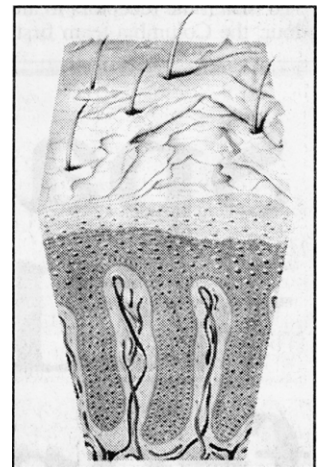
‘It seems to work very well and the results are encouraging. The advantage over ultraviolet is that you are treating only affected skin and there appear to be no side effects apart from a negligible localised burning sensation.

‘One of the problems with psoriasis is that it can come back again, so no treatment is a permanent fix.’

Because the new treatment appears to have no side effects, it is likely to be safe for repeated application to the same areas if the psoriasis returns.

The goal of the Manchester team now is to work up to a system that exposes the whole body to the light.

‘The way forward is to paint this photo-sensitiser on to all the plaques and then stand the patient in a light-therapy kiosk. Just the areas treated with the sensitiser cream would be treated, sparing the patient’s normal skin,’ says Griffiths.



Psoriasis: new treatment

The Sunday Times

Lees bij de volgende opgave eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.

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“Psoriasis: new treatment” (kop tekst 10)

Je bent benieuwd naar de voordelen van de nieuwe behandeling ten opzichte van bestaande behandelingen.

3p **41** Welke drie voordelen zijn te verwachten volgens dit artikel?