

# Kim Kardashian Has Psoriatic Arthritis. Here Is What You Need To Know About the Condition.

Kim Kardashian, a media personality and businesswoman famed for her involvement in the reality show "Keeping Up With The Kardashians" has been open about her struggles with psoriatic arthritis. She shared on her [sister Kourtney's website Poosh](#) that her first psoriasis flare-up was triggered by a common cold 25 years ago.

What appeared as scaly, red, and white skin plaques initially managed by corticosteroid shots morphed into something more extensive. Just a few days before her iconic appearance at the Met Gala where she showcased Marilyn Monroe's "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" dress, she developed symptoms that amplified beyond skin rashes. The American socialite revealed that she not only battled with psoriasis but also psoriatic arthritis, an autoimmune condition that affects up to [20-30%](#) of people with psoriasis.

## Getting To Know Psoriatic Arthritis

Psoriatic arthritis, as the name suggests, is a combination of both psoriasis and arthritis. Psoriasis is a skin condition that causes the development of itchy scaly patches, typically found on the knees, elbows, trunk, and scalp. Arthritis, on the other hand, is a medical condition that affects the joints, the areas where bones meet through a disease process that results in swelling, stiffness, pain, and inflammation. Psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, together, have been referred to as [psoriatic diseases](#).

Psoriatic arthritis may affect a percentage of individuals diagnosed with psoriasis, usually emerging a few years after the initial diagnosis of psoriasis is made. In a distinct group of people, the symptoms of arthritis will precede the appearance of psoriatic rashes.

Both psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are subgroups of chronic autoimmune disease which can significantly impact patients' quality of life and morbidity.

## Learning the Presentations of Psoriatic Arthritis

The disease manifests differently and progressively from one person to another. Common [presentations](#) of psoriatic arthritis include:

- Involvement of psoriatic rash with scaly, inflamed patches of skin usually appearing on the scalp, elbow, or knees
- Pain, swelling, and stiffness of one or more joints.
- Lack of energy and persistent fatigue.
- Local tenderness over areas where tendons or ligaments attach to the bones, usually affecting the back of the heel and sole
- Painful, inflamed, and sausage-like swelling of the digits
- Nail changes that may include denting or separation from nail beds
- Inflammation of the eyes

## Understanding the Genetic Background of Psoriatic Arthritis

*"I'd heard of psoriasis before because my mom has always had it, but she didn't have red flaky dots all over her," said [Kardashian](#).*

Her mom Kris Jenner was diagnosed at age of 30.

Psoriatic arthritis is an immune-mediated disease characterized by an overactive immune system that attacks its cells. Like most diseases of that nature, both genetic predisposition and environmental factors such as obesity, infection, trauma, or stress can trigger the disease onset.

The finding is highlighted by a [study](#) that recruited data from 1393 patients in a longitudinal, multicenter Psoriatic Arthritis International Database. Results from the research revealed that approximately 40% of patients with psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis possess a family history of a similar condition. Among those, many were women who developed earlier onset of psoriasis with frequent musculoskeletal involvements. The recurrence rate of psoriatic arthritis has also been documented across the literature to be as high as [30-55%](#) in siblings and first-degree relatives.

## Diagnosing Psoriatic Arthritis

There is no single mode of test that can pinpoint the diagnosis of psoriatic arthritis in a person. Instead, medical professionals employ a combination of medical history, physical examinations, laboratory tests, and imaging to confirm the diagnosis.

In a laboratory test, blood work may entail the investigations of antibodies such as rheumatoid factors and anti-CCP (anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide) which may signify immune disease. Inflammatory markers such as sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP) are useful to confirm the inflammatory contribution of the disease.

X-ray imaging is the gold standard for revealing arthritic changes in the joints, especially at the later stage of disease progression.

## Treating Symptoms of Psoriatic Arthritis, a Disease With No Current Cure

A singular cure for a persistently life-changing disease such as psoriatic arthritis has not been discovered. Despite the absence of a definitive cure, treatments to alleviate its symptoms and halt disease progression are available.

Pharmacological treatments introduce avenues for the application of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and local glucocorticoid injections as initial therapy. Another group of medicine referred to as [disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs \(DMARDs\)](#) has significantly improved the prognosis of the disease by curbing the immune system activity. DMARDs can be non-biologic such as methotrexate, sulfasalazine, and cyclosporine or biologics

*“DMARDs slow down psoriatic arthritis and improve quality of life for most people,” says [rheumatologist Howard R. Smith, MD](#). “Some patients will even achieve remission while taking them. But more typically, disease activity continues, but at a slower, less intense rate.”*

Non-pharmacological treatments such as exercising, introducing heat and cold therapy to affected joints, alleviating stress, and conserving energy are equally vital ways to manage the disease.

## Dissecting Kim’s Claims on Remedies That Help Her Psoriatic Arthritis

For Kim Kardashian herself, experimenting with all possible solutions under the sun has resulted in creative and ingenious ideas to manage her psoriatic arthritis flare-ups. She was candid about exploring solutions from resorting to Costa Rican spring water to splashing sister Kourtney’s breast milk on her psoriasis rash.

Recently, she claimed that adopting an exclusively **plant-based diet** has been beneficial in managing flare-ups from autoimmune diseases. While there is no conclusive evidence that an exclusively vegan diet will directly halt the disease progression of psoriatic arthritis, researchers say that nutrition can be a therapeutic tool.

First of all, a [study](#) stressed that maintenance of a healthy BMI through low-calorie diets and physical exercise has been documented to reduce oxidative stressors. A similar resource

highlighted that nutrition strategies consisting of a Mediterranean diet (MD) which is characterized by a high intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, fish, and low consumption of dairy products, meats, and eggs appear to have a promising potential theoretically despite lacking evidence.

Another strong suggestion made by Kim to manage her autoimmune disease, especially the psoriasis component is through the application of **UVB and LED phototherapy**. Phototherapy is not foreign to the world of dermatology and is a prescribed treatment to manage psoriasis. It works by reducing inflammation and slowing down the growth of affected skin cells.

There are different profiles of [phototherapy](#) but common types that dermatologists prescribe include UVB light, laser treatment, PUVA bath, and at-home light box, which seems to be the one Kim opted for. [Data](#) estimated that improvement or disappearance of dermatological symptoms is predicted in 50-90 out of 100 people who participate in phototherapy treatment for psoriasis.

## Standing on the Tip of an Iceberg

Like Kim, millions of Americans experience psoriatic disease. With the advancement of technology and continuous attempts to discover the pathological pathways of the disease, more is being understood about the disease than ever before.

*"We're now recognizing psoriatic arthritis more than before. Our focus on it is surprisingly recent, only in the last 40 or 50 years,"* says [David Pisetsky, MD](#), Ph.D., professor of medicine at Duke University School of Medicine.