

Scalp psoriasis: a few tips for you, your hairdresser or barber.



Communication – if you are apprehensive, it's often a good idea to say something in advance, for example by calling before your appointment to explain your condition or by mentioning it to your hairdresser or barber at the start of your visit. Most are very familiar with psoriasis.



Products – don't be afraid to ask if it's possible to bring your own shampoo/conditioner.



Technique – you may wish to discuss the treatment(s) you are using with your hairdresser so that they can help you in choosing a style that suits you and your needs e.g. a style that still allows easy application of treatments.



General tips

Be gentle – It is important to wash, dry and brush/comb your hair gently, paying attention to **water temperature** (not too hot!) and that the **heat settings** for hairdryer or other hair appliances are not at their maximum.



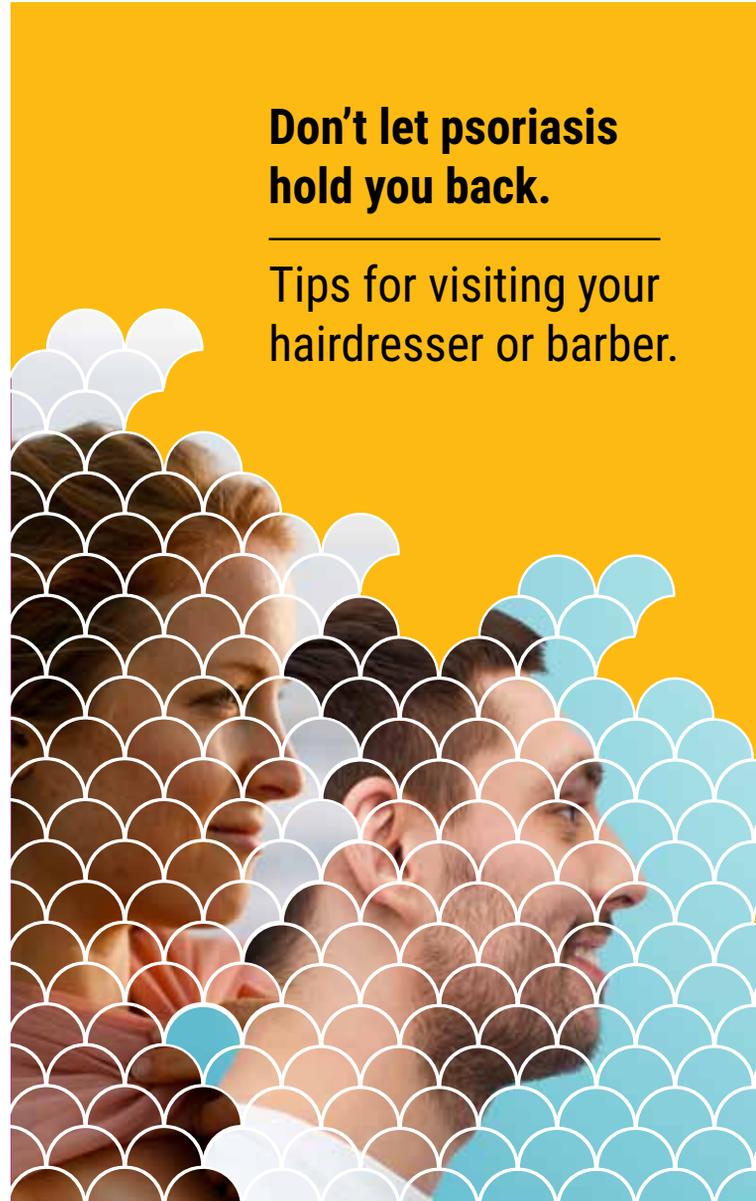
Though it depends on how severe your condition is, generally scalp psoriasis doesn't prevent the use of hair-styling products like hairspray, mousse, gel, wax or serum, or treatments such as perming or colouring. However, be careful with products if you have an inflamed scalp and stop using them if they irritate or sting. Discuss the need for **patch testing** products with your hairdresser e.g. if using hair dye.

This leaflet has been prepared by the Irish Skin Foundation in consultation with people with psoriasis, dermatology nurses and consultant dermatologists.

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Don't let psoriasis hold you back.

Tips for visiting your hairdresser or barber.



*Psoriasis is not contagious, but if you have it, you may have experienced situations where people mistakenly think it is. To mark World Psoriasis Day this year, the **SaySomething** campaign focuses on the stigma that can sometimes surround the condition. The Irish Skin Foundation seeks to educate the public to help dispel myths and empower people with psoriasis to handle everyday situations.*

An everyday situation: visiting the hairdresser or barber

Sometimes having scalp psoriasis can make you feel uncomfortable or anxious in advance of a hair appointment because of the visibility of the condition and worries about what the hairdresser or barber might think or say. Read on to learn more about psoriasis and for some tips that may help you feel more at ease...

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a very common, non-contagious, long-term inflammatory skin disorder in which there is an increase in the rate at which skin cells are produced and shed from the skin.

It affects approximately **73,000 people** in Ireland. The red, raised scaly patches of psoriasis can affect any part of the skin surface, but most commonly involve the elbows, knees, scalp, and lower back.

Some things you should know about psoriasis

Psoriasis is a condition that tends to run in families - both the immune system and genetics are important in its development.

Environmental factors can also play a role in developing the condition. In some cases, emotional stress, infection (such as a streptococcal throat infection), injury to the skin or certain medications can trigger the first episode of psoriasis, while certain lifestyle factors (such as heavy drinking and smoking) may worsen it.

Psoriasis is not contagious, infectious or the result of poor hygiene.

Although there is no cure yet, treatments are available to manage the condition.

Scalp psoriasis

Psoriasis affecting the scalp is **very common**; almost 80% of people with psoriasis will have scalp involvement at some point in their lives. Scalp psoriasis may appear as red, raised, scaly plaques (patches) which can extend to, or just beyond the hairline and commonly occurs behind the ears.

Ask your healthcare professional for advice about suitable products, treatment and the on-going management of your scalp psoriasis.