

## ATTENTION NEWS / HEALTH EDITORS

### **Psoriasis Support Canada Launches Awareness Campaign Called "Shed Your Threads"**

#### **Take It All Off for Psoriasis Support**



**Toronto, October 3, 2008** - A recent study conducted by Psoriasis Support Canada, an online support program for individuals with psoriasis, produced some startling insights into the psychological impact that moderate-to-severe psoriasis has on Canadian sufferers.

Results of the Quality of Life Assessment of Canadians with Psoriasis revealed that 58 per cent of respondents regularly wear long sleeves and pants to cover their psoriasis - giving an indication of this disease's tremendous psychological impact. The study also found that 14 per cent of respondents are not receiving any treatment for their psoriasis and that almost 10 per cent of individuals have given up on treating their psoriasis, due to frustration from the lack of results. Seventy per cent of respondents to the study said they felt embarrassed as a result of their psoriasis.

Shed Your Threads is an awareness campaign developed through Psoriasis Support Canada to motivate individuals with psoriasis to work together in overcoming the physical and emotional challenges presented by the condition. Through the organization's online community ([www.psoriasisissupport.ca](http://www.psoriasisissupport.ca)), people with psoriasis and their supporters can sign up to make a personal declaration - and follow through with a list of helpful commitments that aim to encourage, empower and educate. Seeing a dermatologist and committing to 15-30 minutes of exercise per day are just two of the 13 commitments listed. The campaign will commence this October during Psoriasis Awareness Month.

All Canadians with psoriasis are invited to participate in "Shed Your Threads" - especially those individuals committed to changing their outlook on the physical and emotional implications of their condition, as well as the kind of treatment they receive. Friends, family members and colleagues are also welcome. Anyone signing the psoriasis declaration online at [www.shedyourthreads.ca](http://www.shedyourthreads.ca) will be encouraged to wear an "I'm Shedding My Threads with Psoriasis Support Canada" t-shirt on June 21, 2009, the first day of summer, and to post a photo on Psoriasis Support Canada's "Map of Encouragement" - to help raise awareness of this life-altering disease. T-shirts are available, free of charge, through [www.shedyourthreads.ca](http://www.shedyourthreads.ca).

"Initiatives like "Shed Your Threads" are important to get patients involved in managing and taking control of their condition, as well as in supporting others. This is an important part of the treatment process," said Dr. Norman Wasel, Edmonton-based dermatologist. "Psoriasis patients can definitely benefit from the support and encouragement they receive from peers."

An online video will promote the campaign and encourage those participating in this first-of-its-kind initiative for Canadians with psoriasis. The video, featuring healthcare professionals and psoriasis sufferers alike, will be available for viewing on social media networks such as Facebook and YouTube, and will be posted at [www.psoriasisissupport.ca](http://www.psoriasisissupport.ca).

#### **About Psoriasis Support Canada**

Psoriasis Support Canada began in response to an ever-growing need for support and resources for people living with psoriasis in Canada, following considerable research into the most effective patient-driven psoriasis organizations. Psoriasis Support Canada has been able to draw upon the advice,



## Press Release

information and effectiveness of other support programs in order to create a Canadian-based, psoriasis support network.

Psoriasis Support Canada is a national, non-commercial and fully bilingual community of psoriasis sufferers, their families, friends and employers. Psoriasis Support Canada connects people with psoriasis or who have an interest in this disease to health and lifestyle resources, healthcare professionals and services. The program provides practical tips and information to help them better understand, manage and treat their condition.

Psoriasis Support Canada has been made possible thanks to an educational grant from Astellas Pharma Canada, Inc., a leader in the field of dermatology.

Media who wish to obtain a copy of the results of the Quality of Life Assessment of Canadians with Psoriasis, or to arrange an interview with Dr. Wasel, please contact:

**Communications MECA**

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