

# Weight loss reduces psoriasis symptoms

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Credit: University of Copenhagen

Weight loss has a significant and prolonged positive impact on psoriasis symptoms and quality of life. The findings stem from a study conducted by Herlev and Gentofte Hospital, in collaboration with the University of Copenhagen's Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports and other participants. The results are published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, an internationally renowned scientific journal.

**Klinisk foto, Gentofte hospital**

Sixty test-subjects, obese and affected by [psoriasis](#), lost an average of fifteen kilos over a sixteen-week period while improving their quality of life and reducing the severity of their psoriasis. Upon follow up, one year later, the subjects remained ten kilos below their starting weights, and improvements in their psoriasis symptoms and quality of life were maintained.

## **More overweight people, more psoriasis**

"150,000 Danes suffer from varying degrees of psoriasis," explains the study's project manager, Professor and Senior Physician Lone Skov, Herlev and Gentofte Hospital, Department of Dermatology and Allergy, University of Copenhagen. We know that there is a connection between being overweight and psoriasis; being more overweight makes the disease worse.

Skov is supported by article co-author, Professor Arne Astrup, of the University of Copenhagen's Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports: "We know that both psoriasis and obesity are linked with an increased incidence of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. If we could get obese psoriasis patients to lose weight and keep the weight off, we could potentially derive positive effects on their overall health and quality of life as well."

## **Weight loss leads to improved quality of life**

A study conducted in 2012 led to obese test subjects with psoriasis losing between 10-15% of their starting weights. The study demonstrated that there was a tendency for [weight loss](#) to reduce the severity of psoriasis among the subjects. Furthermore, the study clearly demonstrated that weight loss led to a significantly better quality of life - with a lasting effect.

"When we revisited test subjects one year later, they had only regained five kilos. Thus, they remained ten kilos beneath their starting weights. This was impressive in and of itself, but it was even more positive that they had maintained the effects of their initial weight loss with regards to the diminished severity of their psoriasis and quality of life," explains Dr. Peter Jensen, senior resident, ph.d. at Herlev and Gentofte Hospital, University of Copenhagen.

## **Weight loss is one aspect of broader treatment regimen**

Professor Arne Astrup points to the relevance of the results for psoriasis treatment: "The results underscore the importance of focusing on weight loss as one element in a broad spectrum approach to effective psoriasis treatment for overweight patients. A by-product of weight loss might be a reduction of the complications associated with obesity. This results in a significant effect on the overall well-being of patients."

The study results are published in the article, 'Long-term effects of weight reduction on the severity of psoriasis in a cohort derived from a randomized trial: a prospective observational follow-up study', found in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

**More information:** P. Jensen et al. Long-term effects of weight reduction on the severity of psoriasis in a cohort derived from a randomized trial: a prospective observational follow-up study, *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (2016). [DOI: 10.3945/ajcn.115.125849](https://doi.org/10.3945/ajcn.115.125849)

Provided by University of Copenhagen

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