Comparative Effectiveness of Commonly Used Systemic Treatments or Phototherapy for Moderate to Severe Plaque Psoriasis in the Clinical Practice Setting

Joel M. Gelfand, MD, MSCE; Joy Wan, BA; Kristina Callis Duffin, MD; Gerald G. Krueger, MD; Robert E. Kalb, MD; Jamie D. Weisman, MD; Brian R. Sperber, MD, PhD; Michael B. Stierstorfer, MD; Bruce A. Brod, MD; Stephen M. Schleicher, MD; Bruce F. Bebo Jr, PhD; Andrea B. Troxel, ScD; Daniel B. Shin, BA; Jane M. Steinemann, BA; Jennifer Goldfarb, RN; Howa Yeung, BS; Abby S. Van Voorhees, MD

Objective: To compare the effectiveness of biologic systemic therapy, nonbiologic systemic therapy, and phototherapy for treatment of psoriasis.

Design: A cross-sectional design was used.

Setting: Ten outpatient dermatology sites across the United States participating in the Dermatology Clinical Effectiveness Research Network contributed to the study.

Participants: A total of 713 patients with plaque psoriasis receiving systemic monotherapy (ie, methotrexate sodium, adalimumab, etanercept, or ustekinumab) or narrowband UV-B phototherapy.

Main Outcome Measures: The primary outcome of the study was clear or almost clear skin on the Physician Global Assessment scale. Secondary outcomes were score on the Psoriasis Area and Severity Index, affected body surface area, and score on the Dermatology Life Quality Index.

Results: The proportion of patients with clear or almost clear ratings on the Physician Global Assessment scale differed among treatments: methotrexate (23.8%), adalimumab (47.7%), etanercept (34.2%), ustekinumab (36.1%), and narrowband UV-B (27.6%) ($P < .001$). In adjusted analyses, patients receiving adalimumab (relative response rate, 2.15; 95% CI, 1.60-2.90), etanercept (1.45; 1.06-1.97), and ustekinumab (1.57; 1.06-2.32) were more likely to have clear or almost clear skin vs patients receiving methotrexate. Patients receiving phototherapy showed no significant difference (1.35; 95% CI, 0.93-1.96) compared with those receiving methotrexate. No response difference was observed with respect to quality of life. Treatment doses were double the recommended doses in 36.1% of patients taking etanercept and 11.8% of those taking adalimumab; 10.6% of patients undergoing phototherapy received the recommended treatment frequency.

Conclusions: The effectiveness of psoriasis therapies in clinical practice may be lower than that reported in previous trials. Although relative differences in objective response rates among therapies may exist, absolute differences are small and may not be clinically significant. Dosing of common therapies varied from trial recommendations. These results provide novel benchmarks emphasizing the critical importance of studying effectiveness in real-world practice.


PSORIASIS IS A COMMON, chronic inflammatory disease of the skin and joints mediated by types 1 and 17 helper T cells. It can develop at any age, but onset most commonly occurs in young adulthood. The disease is believed to be incurable and long-term spontaneous remissions are rare. Psoriasis is associated with impairment in physical and emotional health even in patients with mild disease, and patients with psoriasis requiring systemic therapy or phototherapy (ie, those with moderate to severe disease) have an increased risk of major cardiovascular events and mortality independent of traditional risk factors.6,9

Moderate to severe psoriasis is typically defined as disease affecting more than 3% to 5% of body surface area (BSA) or requiring systemic treatment or phototherapy for successful management.10-11 It is estimated that more than 1.4 million Americans and 25 million individuals worldwide have moderate to severe psoriasis.12 Traditional oral systemic therapies, such as methotrexate sodium, acitretin, and cyclosporine, have been available for several decades, but their use can be limited by patient intolerance or organ-specific toxic effects with long-term
use. In the past decade, the treatment of moderate to severe psoriasis has undergone a revolution with the US Food and Drug Administration approval of 6 biologic drugs that target T cells and cytokines critical to the pathogenesis of psoriasis. Although these new therapies have proved efficacious for psoriasis in short-term studies, they are associated with high costs, diminished efficacy with long-term treatment, and risks of rare but serious adverse effects that are still being recognized. For example, efalizumab, which targets T cells, was voluntarily removed from the market because of a rare risk of progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy identified in postmarketing spontaneous reports.

Despite the growing repertoire of psoriasis treatments, insufficient data exist to determine which therapies are first-, second-, and third-line. Only a few short-term comparative trials of oral systemic and biologic agents for psoriasis have been conducted and, to our knowledge, there are no data available to evaluate the effectiveness of these therapies in real-world conditions, which is a critical and recognized data gap in comparative effectiveness research. Therefore, the purpose of this multicenter study was to describe and compare the effectiveness of these therapies in real-world conditions, an area of current importance for psoriasis treatment in primary care.

We conducted a cross-sectional study to determine the effectiveness of commonly used systemic therapy or phototherapy for moderate to severe psoriasis. The study was approved by the University of Pennsylvania and University of Utah institutional review boards, and informed consent was obtained from all patients. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

**METHODS**

**STUDY DESIGN AND PARTICIPANT PROTECTION**

We conducted a cross-sectional study to determine the effectiveness of commonly used systemic therapy or phototherapy for moderate to severe psoriasis. The study was approved by the University of Pennsylvania and University of Utah institutional review boards, and informed consent was obtained from all patients. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

**SETTING**

Data were collected by 12 clinicians (10 dermatologists [J.M.G., K.C., G.G.K., R.E.K., J.D.W., B.R.S., M.B.S., B.A.B., S.M.S., and A.S.V.] and 2 physician assistants) who are members of the Dermatology Clinical Effectiveness Research Network (DCERN). Developed through funding received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, DCERN includes 2 academic medical centers (University of Pennsylvania and University of Utah, each with a hospital-based site and a separate community-based site) and 6 private practices in Georgia, Pennsylvania, New York, and Colorado (see http://www.dercern.org for details). Data were collected from February 10, 2010, through June 30, 2011. Patient data were collected prospectively at a single, regularly scheduled clinic appointment, and no follow-up data were collected.

**PARTICIPANTS**

To minimize bias, broad inclusion criteria were used for the enrollment of consecutive patients being seen by their dermatology provider in DCERN practices for a routine follow-up appointment. Participants were established patients who met at least 1 of the following criteria: were currently receiving a biologic, oral systemic, or phototherapy prescribed by the dermatologist or physician assistant for psoriasis; were candidates for systemic therapy as defined by a history of 5% or more BSA involvement as documented in the medical record; or were previously treated with a biologic, oral systemic, or phototherapy for psoriasis. To further reduce bias, patients new to the practice became eligible for study inclusion only at their next regularly scheduled visit subsequent to the initial appointment. Patients were excluded if they did not meet these criteria or were unable or unwilling to provide consent. Enrolled patients were compensated $10 for completing the study surveys and interviews. In the analyses presented herein, we included patients if they were currently receiving a single commonly used systemic therapy or phototherapy for a primary indication of plaque psoriasis (ie, >5% of participants). We excluded patients from this analysis who were not currently receiving systemic or phototherapy for psoriasis, who were receiving more than 1 systemic or phototherapy at the time of their visit, and whose primary indication was a variant of psoriasis other than plaque (eg, guttate, palmoplantar).

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

We first conducted descriptive statistical analysis of the patient population and evaluated univariate analyses using the Kruskal-Wallis test for grouped ordinal data; unpaired, 2-tailed t tests and Mann-Whitney tests for pairwise comparisons of continuous data; and χ² or Fisher exact test for dichotomous data. We then performed modified Poisson regression with robust
To build our model, we used a purposeful selection approach to determine which factors independently predicted optimal patient outcomes as defined in the “Variables” subsection of the “Methods” section.25 Methotrexate was chosen as the base (reference) treatment, since it is often considered the standard with which novel therapies are compared.

We collected data on 1755 consecutively eligible patients with psoriasis (5% of patients declined to participate), which was within 12% of our projected sample size; the 713 patients who were receiving commonly used monotherapy with systemic agents or phototherapy for plaque psoriasis were included in this analysis (Figure 1). Missing data did not exceed 2.8% for any of the variables analyzed. Mean (SD) age of the patients was 48.6 (15.5) years; they had a median of 2 comorbidities (interquartile range [IQR], 1-4) in addition to psoriasis and were overweight, on average (body mass index [calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared]; IQR, 1-4) in addition to psoriasis and was overweight, on average (Figure 1).

RESULTS

### Table 1. Baseline Patient and Psoriasis Characteristics in 713 Patients With Psoriasis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>No. (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age, y</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>48.6 (15.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median (IQR)</td>
<td>49 (38-60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1052 (76.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>300 (21.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>606 (85.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>11 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>18 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>47 (5.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comorbidities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of comorbidities, median (IQR)</td>
<td>2 (1-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BMI</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median (IQR)</td>
<td>28.8 (25.3-33.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Days of topical medication use</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of days of topical medication use in past week, median (IQR)</td>
<td>2 (0-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psoriasis diagnosis</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians diagnosed</td>
<td>161 (22.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Previous systemic treatment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biologic</td>
<td>266 (37.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral systemic</td>
<td>314 (44.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phototherapy</td>
<td>295 (41.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>18 (2.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations: BMI, body mass index (calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared); IQR, interquartile range.

aPercentages may not total 100 because of missing data, which did not exceed 1.5% for any particular characteristic.

bIncluding cardiovascular, lung, infection, gastrointestinal, renal, endocrine, musculoskeletal, psychiatric, neurologic, malignant, or autoimmune diseases.

cPercentages do not total 100 because some patients may have used more than one previous treatment.
In terms of objective response measurements, we observed statistically significant differences in median PGA (P < .001), PASI (P = .02), and BSA (P = .01) across these therapies; however, absolute differences were small and there was no statistically significant difference in DLQI (P = .15) (Table 3). There were significant differences in the frequency of topical prescription use within the past week, with patients receiving NB UV-B reporting the most frequent use (P < .001). The crude response rate (clear or almost clear on the PGA, as indicated by scores of ≤1) was highest for adalimumab (47.7%; 95% CI, 39.5%-56.0%), followed by ustekinumab (36.1%; 25.1%-48.3%), etanercept (34.2%; 27.5%-41.4%), NB UV-B (27.6%; 20.0%-36.4%), and methotrexate (23.8%; 17.7%-30.9%) (Figure 2A). Using the DLQI to assess outcome provides a different profile; the response rate, defined as no effect or a small effect (as indicated by scores of ≤5), was higher and more closely aggregated among the treatments, ranging from 68.3% (95% CI, 59.2%-76.5%) with NB UV-B to 78.0% (70.5%-84.3%) with adalimumab (Figure 2B).

Patients who were responders based on PGA were more likely to be female, to be of normal weight or underweight, to be treated in a private practice setting, and to have longer duration of current treatment and were less likely to have used topical prescription therapy within the past week (data not shown). The unadjusted and adjusted relative rates of PGA responses are shown in Table 4; in comparison with patients taking methotrexate, those receiving adalimumab, etanercept, and ustekinumab had significantly higher response rates. Those using NB UV-B also had a higher, although not

### Table 2. Dosage and Frequency of Treatmenta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Methotrexate Sodium (n=174) [24.4%]</th>
<th>Adalimumab (n=152) [21.3%]</th>
<th>Etanercept (n=191) [26.8%]</th>
<th>Ustekinumab (n=73) [10.2%]</th>
<th>NB UV-B (n=123) [17.3%]</th>
<th>P Valueb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dosage (%)</td>
<td>7.5 mg/wk (1.7)</td>
<td>40 mg every 2 wk (86.8)</td>
<td>50 mg every 2 wk (4.7)</td>
<td>45 mg/kg every 3 mo (56.2)</td>
<td>&lt;3 Treatments in past 4 wk (5.7)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.5-15 mg (62.6)</td>
<td>80 mg every 2 wk (0.7)</td>
<td>25 mg once/wk (3.1)</td>
<td>90 mg/kg every 3 mo (35.6)</td>
<td>5-6 Treatments in past 4 wk (23.6)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.5-25 mg (27.6)</td>
<td>40 mg once/wk (11.2)</td>
<td>50 mg once/wk (49.7)</td>
<td>Other (5.5)</td>
<td>6-8 Treatments in past 4 wk (31.7)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                | ≥30 mg (5.2)                    | 25 mg twice/wk (3.1)        | Other (2.9)                 | 10.6% of patients undergoing NB UV-B therapy received 12 or more photodoses, respectively. Moreover, 10.6% of patients undergoing NB UV-B therapy received 12 or more phototherapy treatments in the past 4 weeks.

In terms of objective response measurements, we observed statistically significant differences in median PGA (P < .001), PASI (P = .02), and BSA (P = .01) across these therapies; however, absolute differences were small and there was no statistically significant difference in DLQI (P = .15) (Table 3). There were significant differences in the frequency of topical prescription use within the past week, with patients receiving NB UV-B reporting the most frequent use (P < .001). The crude response rate (clear or almost clear on the PGA, as indicated by scores of ≤1) was highest for adalimumab (47.7%; 95% CI, 39.5%-56.0%), followed by ustekinumab (36.1%; 25.1%-48.3%), etanercept (34.2%; 27.5%-41.4%), NB UV-B (27.6%; 20.0%-36.4%), and methotrexate (23.8%; 17.7%-30.9%) (Figure 2A). Using the DLQI to assess outcome provides a different profile; the response rate, defined as no effect or a small effect (as indicated by scores of ≤5), was higher and more closely aggregated among the treatments, ranging from 68.3% (95% CI, 59.2%-76.5%) with NB UV-B to 78.0% (70.5%-84.3%) with adalimumab (Figure 2B).

Patients who were responders based on PGA were more likely to be female, to be of normal weight or underweight, to be treated in a private practice setting, and to have had longer duration of current treatment and were less likely to have used topical prescription therapy within the past week (data not shown). The unadjusted and adjusted relative rates of PGA responses are shown in Table 4; in comparison with patients taking methotrexate, those receiving adalimumab, etanercept, and ustekinumab had significantly higher response rates. Those using NB UV-B also had a higher, although not...
necessary to optimize response.32 Patients who partici-
pating the frequency of treatments (ie, only 10.6% of patients receiving phototherapy were re-
venting the frequency of treatments (ie, only 10.6% of patients receiving phototherapy were re-

In sensitivity analyses, there was no evidence of re-

sponse rate differences when using DLQI as the out-

come (data not shown). When we evaluated outcomes of BSA or PASI, the differences in response rates were at-

tenuated and occasionally lost statistical significance, par-

ticularly in the cases of etanercept and ustekinumab. When evaluating duration of current therapy use (≥3, 6, or 12 months), estimates for adalimumab remained stable and those for ustekinumab showed evidence of in-
creasing efficacy with longer treatment; results for etan-

The crude response rates for patients treated for 3 or more months were 26.4% (95% CI, 19.3-34.5) for methotrexate, 50.4% (41.2-59.6) for adalimumab, 36.4% (29.0-44.3) for etanercept, 46% (31.8-60.7) for ustekinumab, and 41.5% (26.3-57.9) for NB UV-B.

This study comprehensively detailed the effectiveness of commonly used systemic therapy and phototherapy treatments for moderate to severe psoriasis in the real-world clinical practice setting. Based on a single assessment of PGA, only 23.8% to 47.7% of patients with psoriasis cur-
rently receiving systemic therapy or phototherapy had achieved a clear or almost clear response to the treat-
ment. Of special importance, the effectiveness of sys-

temic psoriasis therapies was lower in the real-world practice setting compared with their reported efficacy in the randomized controlled trial setting. For example, the rate of being clear or almost clear of psoriasis in our study in contrast to that in the Comparative Study of Humira vs Methotrexate vs Placebo in Psoriasis Patients (CHAM-

In patient-reported outcomes on the DLQI, 68.3% to 78.0% of patients reported no or only a mild effect of psoriasis on their health-related quality of life (Dermatology Life Quality Index score, ≤5). NB indicates narrowband. Limit lines indicate 95% CI.

Inpatient-reported outcomes on the DLQI, 68.3% to 78.0% of patients reported no or only a mild effect of psoriasis on their health-related quality of life, indicating higher response to therapy on subjective, patient-reported measures than on objective, physician-reported outcomes.34 The adjusted response rate for health-related quality of life, which has been suggested to be a better metric of psoriasis severity than objective measures (ie, BSA), was nearly identical across the thera-
pies we evaluated. Similarly, the differences that we ob-
served in PGA response rates were not mirrored by dif-

Figure 2. Response measures by current psoriasis monotherapy. A, Clear or minimal skin disease (Physician Global Assessment score, ≤1). B, No or small effect of psoriasis on quality of life (Dermatology Life Quality Index score, ≤5). NB indicates narrowband. Limit lines indicate 95% CI.
although there are differences in treatment response rates based on objective measures, these differences are small and may not be of clinical significance. Our study has important limitations. Despite our inclusion of a broad range of consecutively enrolled patients and a multivariable analysis that comprehensively adjusted for covariates, treatment assignment was not randomized and therefore we cannot exclude confounding and selection bias as potential sources of error. Additionally, patients receiving phototherapy tend to be purposefully evaluated at intermediate time points (ie, it is necessary to individually fine-tune dosing before achieving a clinical response), so assessment patterns for NB UV-B may have systematically differed from assessment patterns of systemic medications. Similarly, ustekinumab became available in the United States in September 2009, resulting in differing duration of use compared with more established therapies. Moreover, study assessments were not conducted by individuals blinded to treatment status, which could introduce information bias, although such error is unlikely to have systematically affected the results in any particular direction. Because this was not a longitudinal study, the phenomenon of clinical drift is likely present, and thus our results may overestimate the effectiveness of therapies in clinical practice; in other words, only patients with successful response to treatment continue the therapy. Similarly, given the cross-sectional nature of the study, we were not able to compare the relative safety of the therapies. Moreover, although we found no significant differences in health-related quality of life, it is possible that the DLQI was not sensitive enough to detect differences that may exist among patients receiving systemic therapy or phototherapy in the real-world practice setting despite its ability to distinguish between methotrexate and adalimumab effectiveness in the clinical trial setting. Additionally, we focused on current monotherapy in this analysis and thus cannot speak to the comparative effectiveness of combination therapies. Finally, inclusion of more practices and patients from various regions of the United States might further improve the generalizability of the findings.

In conclusion, we conducted a large cross-sectional study evaluating the effectiveness of commonly used systemic therapy and phototherapy for moderate to severe psoriasis in real-world settings that provides important benchmarks to guide future research and policy. Our findings suggest that, although differences in objective responses may exist among these treatment options, absolute differences are small and may not be clinically significant. Furthermore, the absolute response rate to therapies for moderate to severe psoriasis may be lower in the real-world setting than what has been observed in randomized controlled trials. Longitudinal comparative effectiveness studies in real-world practice settings are necessary to confirm and extend our findings.

Accepted for Publication: December 15, 2011.

Author Affiliations: Departments of Dermatology (Drs Gelfand, Brod, and Van Voorhees; Ms Wan, Steinemann, and Goldfarb; and Messrs Shin and Yeung) and Epidemiology and Biostatistics (Drs Gelfand and Troxel and Mr Shin), and Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics (Drs Gelfand and Troxel), University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, Philadelphia; Department of Dermatology, University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake City (Drs Callis Duffin and Krueger); Department of Dermatology, State University of New York at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (Dr Kalb); Peachtree Dermatology Associates, Atlanta, Georgia (Dr Weisman); Colorado Springs Dermatology Clinic, Colorado Springs, Colorado (Dr Sperber); East Penn Dermatology, North Wales, Pennsylvania (Dr Stierstorfer); Dermatology Associates of Lancaster, Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Dr Brod); DermDox Centers for Dermatology, Hazleton, Pennsylvania (Dr Schleicher); National Psoriasis Foundation, Portland, Oregon (Dr Bebo); and Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Ms Steinemann).

Correspondence: Joel M. Gelfand, MD, Department of Dermatology, University of Pennsylvania, 1471 Penn Tower, One Convention Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (joel.gelfand@uphs.upenn.edu).

Author Contributions: Dr Gelfand had full access to all the data in the study and takes responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis. Study concept and design: Gelfand, Callis Duffin, Krueger, Bebo, and Goldfarb. Acquisition of data: Gelfand, Wan, Callis Duffin, Krueger, Kalb, Weisman, Sperber, Stierstorfer, Brod, Schleicher, Shin, Steinemann, Goldfarb, and Van Voorhees. Analysis and interpretation of data: Gelfand, Wan, Callis Duffin, Brod, Troxel, Shin, Steinemann.

Financial Disclosure: Dr Gelfand served as a consultant for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, Celgene Corp, Janssen Biologics (formerly Centocor), Novartis Corp, and Pfizer Inc, receiving honoraria; had grants or has pending grants from AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, Genentech Inc, Novartis Corp, and Pfizer Inc; and received payment for continuing medical education work related to psoriasis. He also received a donation from Amgen Inc to the University of Pennsylvania to further develop DCERN, which was not used for the current study. Dr Callis Duffin was an investigator, consultant, and/or speaker for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen, ApoPharma, Celgene, Eli Lilly, Genzyme, Incyte, Janssen Biologics/Centocor, NovoNordisk, Pfizer, and Wyeth, receiving honoraria and/or salary; served on the advisory board of Amgen; and received residency/fellowship program funding from AbbVie Laboratories and Amgen. Dr Krueger served as a consultant for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, and Janssen Biologics; had grants or has pending grants from AbbVie Laboratories and Amgen Inc; and received payment for the collection and travel-related expenses from AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, and Janssen Biologics. Dr Kalb served as a consultant for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, Janssen Biologics, LEO Pharma Inc, and Stiefel Laboratories Inc, receiving honoraria; served as an investigator for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, Astellas Pharma Inc, and Janssen Biologics, receiving honoraria; and served as a speaker for AbbVie Laboratories, Amgen Inc, Celgene Laboratories LP, Janssen Biologics, and Stiefel Laboratories Inc. Dr Weisman had grants or has pending grants from AbbVie Laboratories, Brain-tree Laboratories Inc, Celgene Corp, Cipher Pharmaceuticals Inc, and LEO Pharma Inc; and received payments for lectures from AbbVie Laboratories and Amgen Inc. Dr Sperber is the medical director of Stephens & Associates, serving as a consultant for Amgen Inc, and had grants or has pending grants from AbbVie Laboratories and Janssen Biologics. Dr Bebo is employed by the National Psoriasis Foundation, which receives unrestricted financial support from companies that make products used to treat psoriasis, including Amgen Inc, AbbVie Laboratories, Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc, Stiefel Laboratories Inc, Warner Chilcott, Wyeth, Pfizer Inc, Celgene Laboratories LP, and PhotoMedex Inc. Dr Van Voorhees served on advisory boards for Amgen Inc, AbbVie Laboratories, Genentech Inc, Warner Chilcott, Connetics Corporation, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and Janssen Biologics; served as an investigator for Amgen Inc, Genentech Inc, Warner Chilcott, Hoffmann-La Roche Inc, Astellas Pharma US Inc, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and IDEC Corp, receiving grants; served as a consultant for Amgen Inc, Incyte Corp, VGX Pharmaceuticals, Xtrac (a product of PhotoMedex), and Leo Pharma Inc, receiving honoraria; served as a speaker for Amgen Inc, AbbVie Laboratories, Genentech Inc, Connetics Corporation, and Janssen Biologies, receiving honoraria; and received honoraria from Synta Pharmaceuticals Corp.

Funding/Support: This study was supported by grant RC1-AR058204 from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (Dr Gelfand) and by Training Grant T32-AR07465 from the National Institute of Health (Ms Wan and Messrs Shin and Yeung).

Role of the Sponsors: The sponsors had no role in the design and conduct of the study; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data; or in the preparation, review, or approval of the manuscript.

Additional Information: Dr Gelfand serves on the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) task force on recent psoriasis guidelines and on the editorial boards of Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety and the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology. Dr Kalb serves as an associate editor of the Psoriasis Forum. Dr Van Voorhees serves as a medical editor for Dermatology World, as an associate editor of Psoriasis Forum, and on the AAD task force on guidelines of care for psoriasis.


Dermatology for Poets and Bird-watchers

The following questions test your knowledge of dermatology as it relates to literature, the Bible, history, and culture. The final question is for bird-watchers. Answers are provided below.

Questions:
1. The word pox appears in a number of William Shakespeare’s plays. To what illness does it refer?
2. Samson’s hair was arranged into how many tresses (Judges 16:16; 13)?
4. Karl Herzheimer (1861-1942), a German-Jewish dermatologist, helped to describe the Jarisch-Herxheimer reaction in syphilis therapy. In 1942, he was deported by the Nazis to a ghetto, where he perished. What was the ghetto’s name?
5. General George Washington’s face was scarred by smallpox. What method was used to prevent this disease in his troops?
6. Which king of Israel had a ruddy complexion (Samuel 16:12)?
7. In Henrik Ibsen’s play Ghosts, the character Oswald Alving suffers from congenital neurosyphilis. What French word does Ibsen use in the play for syphilis (Act 2)?
8. In Shakespeare’s play Henry IV (Part I, Act 3, Scene 3), Falstaff tells Bardolph: “Thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop, but ‘tis in the nose of thee.” What is the diagnosis of Bardolph’s nose malady?
9. In the original “Star Trek” television series episode “Let That Be Your Last Battlefield,” the character Bele has a striking dermatologic feature. What is it?
10. What scar did Harry Potter have on his forehead?
11. Names of birds such as “pigeon chest” and “seagull murmur” have become part of medical terminology. What bird term describes a facial feature that many people get (2 words)?

Answers:
1. Syphilis.
2. Seven.
3. “Wash the war-paint from your faces, Wash the blood-stains from your fingers.”
4. Terezin, located in the present-day Czech Republic.
5. Variolation.
6. David.
7. Vermoulu, which means worm-eaten.
8. Rosacea.
9. Bele’s skin is half black and half white; the 2 halves are split exactly down the center of his body.
10. A scar in the shape of a lightning bolt from a failed murder attempt by Lord Voldemort.
11. Crow’s feet.

Leonard J. Hoenig, MD

Contact Dr Hoenig at 601 N Flamingo Rd, Ste 201, Pembroke Pines, FL 33028 (gooddocljh@yahoo.com)