



29 • October
World Psoriasis Day

PRESS RELEASE – WORLD PSORIASIS DAY 2016

World Psoriasis Day raises awareness on Oct 29 for over 125 million people with psoriasis

- *Since 2004, October 29 has been dedicated to raising awareness for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis*
- *People with psoriasis and supporters across the world organize celebratory activities*
- *The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations set “Breaking Barriers” as this year’s theme*

October 29 - Today, people with psoriasis come together around the world, calling for understanding of the disease they live with. Psoriasis is a severe, painful, chronic, inflammatory, non-communicable disease, affecting over 125 million people worldwide. Up to 30% of them will develop psoriatic arthritis (an inflammation of the joints) and all run an increased risk of comorbid diseases like diabetes or cardiovascular diseases. As yet, there is no known cure for psoriasis. On World Psoriasis Day, the global psoriasis community unites to celebrate its strength! In campaigning for improved life quality, the community is joined by a global network of psoriasis supporters, from family and friends to healthcare professionals, patient organizations and policy-makers.

“Breaking Barriers” theme on World Psoriasis Day 2016

Every day, people living with psoriasis face immense barriers to their life quality. In the healthcare system, patients often struggle to get a correct diagnosis. The treatment and care they need, may be unavailable or unaffordable. In school and at work, people with psoriasis can miss out on valuable opportunities because their disease forces them to take sick leave. Finally, stigma, discrimination and prejudice often make it harder to get support in relations. The burden of psoriasis is thus so much more than its physical effects. The disease also takes a heavy mental, emotional, social and economic toll – both on individuals and the societies they live in.

That is why this year’s World Psoriasis Day theme is “Breaking Barriers for People with Psoriasis.” The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA), which is the driving force behind World Psoriasis Day, explains this choice. “Over the past years, a lot has happened in the field of global psoriasis advocacy. The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially recognized psoriasis as a severe, chronic inflammatory disease through a groundbreaking resolution and Global Report on Psoriasis. IFPA members have also succeeded in forging active partnerships with national health authorities. This means we are better equipped than ever to make a difference for people with psoriasis,” says Lars Ettarp, President of IFPA. “But we want to take things to the next level. On World Psoriasis Day, we want to fight prejudice, stigmatization and discrimination to raise more awareness, understanding and hope. By breaking down barriers, we help people with psoriasis gain access to diagnosis, treatment and improved life quality.”

World Psoriasis Day activities around the world

Across the world, IFPA’s members will be organizing festive activities. These range from awareness walks, free health screenings and special children programs, to handing out information brochures, holding lectures and conferences, or even giving interviews on national TV. In the Philippines, Josef de Guzman (Chairman of IFPA’s World Psoriasis Day Steering Committee) will be out and about with PsorPhil, the national psoriasis patient organization he founded. For Mr. de Guzman, World Psoriasis Day has a very personal meaning: “I look around me in the psoriasis community, and see people defying the odds every day. Working hard to chase their dreams despite the daily challenges of psoriasis, they manage to reach the pinnacle of success. This shows that when given the opportunity, people with psoriasis too can excel in whatever they do. That is why World Psoriasis Day is so important: we need to address the ongoing stigma, fear of public rejection and discrimination still felt by a lot of us. October 29 brings us one step closer to the point where people with psoriasis no longer need to miss out on opportunities because of our condition.”

How to support World Psoriasis Day

On October 29, anyone can support the World Psoriasis Day campaign in a few easy ways. You can speak up about World Psoriasis Day on Twitter, using the hashtag #WPD16 or #breakbarriers. On Facebook, you can share IFPA's animated "[Breaking Barriers](#)" campaign film (even available with Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese, French, Swedish or Spanish subtitles.) IFPA is also organizing a global Thunderclap campaign, which functions like an online flashmob. Sign up no later than October 28 via [our Thunderclap page](#) to share a World Psoriasis Day support message on your social media. Finally, you can reach out to someone with psoriasis in your family or group of friends, and give them a big hug to let them know you are there for them.

Further information

To read more about World Psoriasis Day, visit: www.worldpsoriasisday.com

More information about the 2016 campaign [can be found here](#).

IFPA's press room can be accessed [here](#).

The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA) is a non-profit organization made up of national and regional psoriasis associations from around the world. As the global psoriasis patient organization, IFPA's goals are to empower its members, improve living conditions for patients, raise awareness of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and cooperate with fellow stakeholders. Since its founding in 1971, IFPA has continuously sought to resolve the challenges facing over 125 million patients in the international psoriasis community.

To learn more about IFPA, visit: www.ifpa-pso.com

Contact person: Mr. Lars Ettarp, IFPA's President – lars@ettarp.se, or Mrs. Sophie Andersson, IFPA's Executive Director – Sophie.Andersson@ifpa-pso.com