

LADIES' HomeJournal

What 7.5 Million of You Have in Common with Kim Kardashian

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Whether we'd openly admit it or not, many of us watched last week's episode of *Keeping up with the Kardashians*, and learned—along with Kim—that she has psoriasis. Her seemingly earth-shattering diagnosis is shared by as many as 7.5 million Americans.

With KK's nuptials fast approaching (August 20th to be exact)—we asked Dr. Marta I. Rendon, founder and medical director of the Rendon Center for Dermatology and Aesthetic Medicine in Boca Raton, FL, to clear up some questions about psoriasis—and to share some insight on what Kim can do if a flareup afflicts her on the big day.

LHJ: What is psoriasis?

Dr. Rendon: Psoriasis is a disease of the immune system and is NOT infectious. It is characterized by red scaly plaques—mostly on the elbows, knees and scalp, but any area could be affected.

LHJ: Is there a way to tell if you're prone to psoriasis, or if you have the psoriasis "gene"?

Dr. Rendon: Psoriasis is a hereditary condition. To determine if you have the genetic predisposition, you would need a very specialized blood test that's not done routinely.

LHJ: What are the symptoms and warning signs of this condition?

Dr. Rendon: Lesions appear on the skin and a dermatologist can diagnose the disease. Symptoms are dry, scaly areas on arms or legs. It can affect any part of the body including face and scalp. Some people have severe itching. OTC hydrocortisone creams can provide minimal relief at first. The next step is to see your dermatologist.

LHJ: Are there any preventative measures that help prevent flare-ups?

Dr. Rendon: There are several exacerbating factors such as alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, sun tanning and stress, so try to avoid any of these things as much as possible. Also, don't scratch, rub, or pick at the lesions. It helps to apply an ointment after showering. Try Cetaphil, Cerave, Aveeno, even Vaseline. Apply to very rough areas such as elbows and knees. Ointments are more occlusive than lotions or creams and are usually more potent. Cold compresses can help, too. Stress-prevention measures such as exercise can help stabilize the disease.

LHJ: What can Kim Kardashian (or anyone with a really crazy-busy life) do to control her flare-ups?

Dr. Rendon: Topical prescription creams are available. There are also laser and phototherapy treatments that can accelerate healing.

LHJ: What's the best way to quickly control or cover up psoriasis?

Dr. Rendon: I recommend applying an ointment after showering, cold compresses, and a mineral-based makeup to conceal any patches.

LHJ: Will her red patches ever completely go away?

Dr. Rendon: Absolutely!! Yes, with a good treatment plan determined by a dermatologist.