

**CANADIANS SET TO WEAR YELLOW TO
SUPPORT PSORIASIS COMMUNITY
PSORIASIS SUPPORT CANADA PROMOTES SHED YOUR
THREADS CAMPAIGN**



Toronto, ON June 19 - On June 21st, 2009 - the first day of summer - Psoriasis Support Canada invites Canadians to **Shed their Threads**. The organization asks Canadians to wear a yellow t-shirt to support the more than one million Canadians suffering from psoriasis - a life-altering skin disease.

Ontario resident Ryan McMenamie knows the pain psoriasis can cause both physically and emotionally. Ryan, who has suffered from psoriasis for 33 years, was asked to "cover his rash" while he worked out at his local gym last year. When challenged, the owner simply said he didn't have the time to answer all the questions other members would be asking about his condition - namely, was it contagious - and didn't understand why Ryan couldn't "just wear a long-sleeved shirt" to cover up his psoriasis.

"Admittedly, the day after, I was fully covered in long sleeves and pants," said McMenamie. "I had always had the attitude of 'this is me, take it or leave it' but the ignorance and lack of empathy from the gym shook me, and has certainly shed some light on the way some individuals will always view things from a cosmetic perspective." Like McMenamie, many psoriasis sufferers cover-up their skin because they feel embarrassed and self-conscious. Due to the visual nature of the condition (it is typically characterized by patches of red and scaly skin), psoriasis can have a significant impact on a person's quality of life. Results of the **Quality of Life Assessment of Canadians with Psoriasis**, conducted by Psoriasis Support Canada, revealed that **70 per cent** of respondents felt embarrassed as a direct result of their condition, with **58 per cent** regularly choosing to wear long sleeves and pants to cover their skin condition - even in the summer months.

It is for this reason that Psoriasis Support Canada - a national support program for people with psoriasis - launched **Shed Your Threads**. The **Shed Your Threads** campaign was designed to encourage sufferers to take action and make strides throughout the year in order to improve their psoriasis and feel comfortable wearing clothes that show their skin in summer. Hundreds of Canadians have posted motivating messages at www.psoriasisupport.ca since the campaign began last October. One testimonial says, "Stand proud. Your psoriasis doesn't change who you are; educate those who are in need to be educated, and ignore those who are ignorant. I've had my share of looks and questions in the past 10 years; I've also been blessed to have a support network to give me the strength to wear sleeveless tops, shorts and skirts. Don't let psoriasis control your life."

The campaign comes to a close on **June 21, 2009**. On that day, Psoriasis Support Canada will ask Canadians to join Ryan, and the one million other psoriasis sufferers across the country, their families and friends, to **wear a yellow t-shirt** in support of psoriasis sufferers everywhere.

"It pains us to know that so many people with psoriasis feel they have to cover up their skin because of what other people think. It's a shame," declared Christine Jackson, Director of the Canadian Skin Patient Alliance, based in Ottawa. "We will absolutely be wearing yellow to raise awareness and to show support on behalf of the Canadian Skin Patient Alliance."

About Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a chronic (ongoing and recurring) life-altering condition characterized by patches of red and usually scaly skin. Affecting about one million Canadians, psoriasis can range in severity and affect any part of the body. Psoriasis usually occurs on the scalp, elbows, knees, lower back and genitals, often in the

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same place on both sides of the body. It can also appear in the fingernails or toenails. Psoriasis usually begins in early adulthood but may develop at any age. It can heal temporarily but come back throughout a person's life. People with psoriasis may suffer discomfort, including pain, itching and emotional distress. Recent research has shown that psoriasis patients often have serious co-morbidities, such as cardiovascular disease or obesity. Psoriasis is not a contagious skin condition - it cannot be spread from one person to another or from one part of the body to another.

About Psoriasis Support Canada

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 and those who have an interest in this disease to health and lifestyle resources, health care professionals and services. The program provides practical tips and information to help them better understand, manage and treat their condition.

For more information and to book interviews contact:

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