

News

The Scary Skin Condition That Nearly Took This Beauty Blogger's Life

Tatiana Bido , Special Projects Editor | December 07, 2016



According to the National Psoriasis Foundation, at least 10 percent of people inherit the genes that eventually lead to the common skin condition. Only 2–3 percent of the population actually develops the disease, but psoriasis is mainly caused by a mixture of genetics and “triggers” or external factors (like stress, skin injuries, medications) that lead to flare-ups that show up on the skin in the form of thick, red, bumpy patches or flakes. For 21-year-old beauty therapist and blogger Bryony Bateman, her condition, erythrodermic psoriasis, became so aggravated that it almost took her life.



Psoriasis causes an overproduction of skin cells, which leads to the red, flaky patches and silvery scales that have plagued many, including celebrities like Kim Kardashian, Leann Rimes, Britney Spears and Cara Delevingne. When the disease took over 98 percent of her skin, Bateman's body went into shock as her immune system began to fight her body's own tissue. "It was like I was burning from the inside," said Bateman. "My body was in a state of shock because my skin was so dry that my body had no hydration at all. I was literally shedding sheets of skin, it was agony."



According to New York dermatologist Gary Goldenberg, MD, psoriasis can pose more serious problems to your health than just the cosmetic ones we've come to know. "Erythrodermic psoriasis is a type of psoriasis vulgaris (common psoriasis) that usually effects the sufferers quality of life in an adverse way through overall skin redness, scaling and itching. Patients with this type of psoriasis can lose water and heat through their skin and that can lead to other imbalances in the body. They may also become dehydrated and prone to infections."



In addition to prescription steroid creams and antibiotics, Bateman has found that sea salt baths and tanning beds have helped to greatly reduce the symptoms that led to her near fatal bout. However, the solutions that work for some may not work for others. Dr. Goldenberg believes a good place to start for people suffering the same symptoms would be a visit with a board-certified dermatologist. “There are multiple options, including injectable and oral medications,” says Dr. Goldenberg. “Light therapy may help as well, but not as quickly as other options. Sometimes patients with this type of psoriasis may need to be hospitalized.”

For Bateman, having to cope with the flare-ups and their nearly fatal side effects gave her the motivation to help others who are facing similar issues and to shine a light on how harmful psoriasis can be. She now shares her story on social media and has begun creating YouTube tutorials to help sufferers with skin care, makeup and fashion tips she's learned through her own experience with the disease. “It was life threatening and without the emergency treatment they gave me, it could have been a different story,” she said. “It was a really horrible experience, but it made me more determined to make other people aware of psoriasis and how dangerous it can be.”