



The Naked Truth Revealed: World Class Photographic Exhibit Captures the Reality Behind Living with Psoriasis

Psoriasis Patients from Around the World Come together to Bare Their Skin and Share Their Stories for New Pan-European Educational Programme

Wyeth, Maidenhead, UK - Thursday 26 March 2009: *Psoriasis: The Naked Truth*, a new pan-European educational programme to expose the physical and emotional impact of living with psoriasis, launches today. The centerpiece of the programme is a photo exhibit that captures the experience of living with psoriasis through portrait photography by award winning photographer Ralf Tooten and features the personal stories of men and women living with the disease.

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition characterised by red, scaly, patches of skin.¹ People with psoriasis feel stigmatised which can lead them to feel isolated, depressed and experience a low quality of life.² Sometimes people with psoriasis can suffer for long periods of time without adequate treatment. In fact, recent research among nearly 350 psoriasis patients in Europe found many were only moderately satisfied with their current medications. In addition, awareness for newer treatment options was low.³ While psoriasis cannot be cured there are treatments available that can help control the disease,¹ enabling people with psoriasis to live full lives despite the disease.

The Exhibition

The *Psoriasis: The Naked Truth* exhibition features 19 men and women from 14 different countries across three continents who all bared their skin and a part of themselves to help others realise that psoriasis does not have to dictate your life.

“I was diagnosed with psoriasis from the age of seven, and from that point on, the disease ruled my life – my job, my relationships, hobbies, where I went on holiday. But I have faced these challenges and found a treatment that has given me control over my life.” said Astrid Sibbes, an active member of Psoriasis Vereniging Nederland and photo shoot participant from The Netherlands. “I joined this effort to let people know that psoriasis is more than just a skin disease, that there are treatments that work and to give other people like me hope that it is possible to have a great life, in spite of the condition.”

Renowned photographer and Hasselblad Masters Award winner Ralf Tooten captured the men and women beneath the disease.

“The challenge for me as a photographer is to get beyond my subject’s skin and to show the person inside,” said Ralf Tooten, exhibit photographer. “This was a very special project because I was photographing a group of people who have spent a large part of their life covering up and being characterised by their skin. These images capture their achievements and their defiance. Psoriasis does not define them and in these photographs, their spirit shines through.”

The Documentary

The photographic exhibition is accompanied by a short documentary film capturing the “behind the scenes” journey of the programme participants and Ralf Tooten. The documentary further contextualises the images by delving deeper into the personal stories of four of the participating patients.

About psoriasis

Psoriasis affects approximately 5.1 million people across Europe,⁴ a third of which will see the first signs of the condition before the age of 16.⁵ Thirty to forty percent of patients will also develop psoriatic arthritis, a painful condition where the joints become inflamed.¹

Treatments are available that give people with psoriasis the opportunity to experience clearer skin and in turn potentially address feelings of depression and anxiety over their condition. It is important for people with psoriasis to discuss the level of impact the disease is having on their quality of life.

“There are a number of effective treatments available for psoriasis, from the more traditional creams and ointments which are suitable for treating mild psoriasis, to the newer biologics which may be more appropriate for people with severe disease,” said Professor Jörg Prinz, the Department of Dermatology at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich, Germany. “Whatever the degree of psoriasis, it is important that psoriasis patients talk with their dermatologist about the range of treatment options available to find the best treatment for them.”

Following the launch of the exhibition in Amsterdam, the *Psoriasis: The Naked Truth* exhibit will travel to various locations throughout Europe. The exhibit, a behind-the-scenes documentary and information about the programme can be viewed at www.psoriasis.thenakedtruth.com.

Wyeth created and funded Psoriasis: The Naked Truth.

For more information on the programme, psoriasis and the treatments available, visit www.psoriasis.thenakedtruth.com

References

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