

**MEDIA RELEASE • COMMUNIQUE AUX MEDIAS • MEDIENMITTEILUNG****Largest global psoriasis survey shows 84% of people face discrimination and humiliation because of their skin**

- *Global survey of over 8,300 people with moderate-to-severe psoriasis is the first to look at perceptions of clear skin<sup>1</sup>*
- *Nearly half (45%) have been asked if they are contagious while 55% do not believe clear or almost clear skin is a realistic goal<sup>1</sup>*
- *Leading experts call for psoriasis patients to accept nothing less than clear skin - more information available on [www.skintolivein.com/Ask4Clear](http://www.skintolivein.com/Ask4Clear)*

**Basel, June 29, 2016** – Novartis today released new results from the largest global survey to date of people with psoriasis. Findings reveal 84% of people with moderate-to-severe psoriasis suffer discrimination and humiliation, with many being stared at in public (40%) as a result of their medical condition<sup>1</sup>. In addition, the results from more than 8,300 participants show that people with psoriasis have very low treatment expectations of achieving clear skin<sup>1</sup>.

“Novartis thanks all the participants who took part in this important survey. The only way we can improve patients’ lives is to listen to them and work with the community to challenge the status quo,” said Vasant Narasimhan, Global Head, Drug Development and Chief Medical Officer, Novartis. “This survey marks our commitment to support the World Health Organization’s (WHO) resolution to make psoriasis a global health priority, fighting the stigma and ignorance associated with psoriasis and advancing patient care.”

Over 8,300 people from 31 countries took part in the survey, and it is also the first of its kind to explore perceptions of clear skin in psoriasis. This is the largest ever partnership between Novartis and patient organizations, including 25 groups from around the world.

Along with unacceptable levels of discrimination and humiliation, the survey shows that nearly half (45%) of people with psoriasis have been asked if they are contagious<sup>1</sup>. The devastating effect psoriasis can have on personal lives and people’s mental health was also revealed, with the survey showing 16% of people admit to hiding themselves away from the world as a coping mechanism<sup>1</sup>. This lack of hope and self-esteem is reflected in the results, with 55% of people stating they do not believe clear or almost clear skin is a realistic goal for them<sup>1</sup>.

“Everyone deserves the right to receive effective treatment for their psoriasis and work towards the goal of clear skin, but this survey shows the majority of people simply don’t think it’s possible,” said Dr. Richard B Warren, Reader Lecturer and Honorary Consultant Dermatologist at the Dermatology Centre Salford Royal Foundation Hospital, University of Manchester. “Though we may not be able to change the public’s attitude overnight, as dermatologists, we should work with patients to encourage them to strive towards a treatment goal of clear skin.”

Further survey results and a new thought provoking video from body paint artist Natalie Fletcher can be found on [www.skintolivein.com](http://www.skintolivein.com), an online hub from Novartis with social media channels across [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#), that is dedicated to educating and supporting patients with severe skin conditions, such as psoriasis. Findings from the survey are also being prepared for submission to scientific journals and will be presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> European Association of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) Congress.

### **About psoriasis**

Psoriasis is a common, non-contagious, autoimmune disease that affects up to 3% of the world's population<sup>2</sup>. Plaque psoriasis is the most common form of the disease and appears as raised, red patches covered with a silvery white buildup of dead skin cells. Psoriasis is not simply a cosmetic problem, but a persistent, chronic (long-lasting), and often distressing disease, which can affect even the simplest aspects of people's daily lives. Up to 30% of people with psoriasis have, or will, develop psoriatic arthritis, in which the joints are also affected, causing debilitating symptoms including pain, stiffness and irreversible joint damage<sup>3,4</sup>. Psoriasis is also associated with other serious health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease and depression<sup>5</sup>.

### **About the survey**

Novartis initiated and funded the survey, which was conducted by the market research company Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK) Switzerland. The survey was supported by a prestigious steering committee of medical experts from around the world. With 8,338 participants, this is the largest global survey to date of people with psoriasis and is the first survey of its kind to focus on what achieving clear skin means to the quality of life for people with psoriasis.

Participants in the survey come from the following 31 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, the UK and the US.

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### **About Novartis**

Novartis provides innovative healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, eye care and cost-saving generic pharmaceuticals. Novartis is the only global company with leading positions in these areas. In 2015, the Group achieved net sales of USD 49.4 billion, while R&D throughout the Group amounted to approximately USD 8.9 billion (USD 8.7 billion excluding impairment and amortization charges). Novartis Group companies employ approximately 118,000 full-time-equivalent associates. Novartis products are available in more than 180 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.com>.

Novartis is on Twitter. Sign up to follow @Novartis at <http://twitter.com/novartis>.

## References

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