

# Pemphigus & Pemphigoid

Everyday life can bring painful discomfort for people living with pemphigus and pemphigoid. The two groups of autoimmune diseases cause blistering of the skin and mucous membranes, increasing the risk of infection and scarring and making basic tasks like eating difficult.

## Pemphigus

Pemphigus occurs when the immune system attacks desmogleins, proteins needed for cell adhesion.

Symptoms include:

- Painful, easily ruptured blisters on the skin, mouth, throat, nose or genitals
- Slowness to heal, increasing infection risk
- Difficulty eating or swallowing

## Pemphigoid

Pemphigoid occurs when antibodies target proteins in the basement membrane.

Symptoms include:

- Tense, fluid-filled blisters that do not easily rupture on the arms, legs, abdomen or inside the mouth
- Itching, redness and inflammation
- Presence in the mucous membrane of the eye, which can cause scarring and vision loss

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## Risk Factors

Both diseases may be caused by a combination of risk factors, including:



### AGE:

More common in adults over 50



### GENETICS:

More common in certain populations



### EXPOSURE TO TRIGGERS:

Certain medications, environmental factors and other autoimmune diseases



## Treatment Barriers

People living with pemphigus or pemphigoid often face treatment barriers.



### **COST**

Treatment costs can be expensive, given that many are used without FDA approval for these specific sets of diseases. The cost of visits to different specialists can increase financial strain.



### **DELAYED DIAGNOSIS**

Misdiagnosis is common because these diseases are rare. The average patient sees five health care providers over 10 months to receive a correct diagnosis, which delays treatment.



### **SPECIALIST AVAILABILITY**

Most dermatologists and specialists are in major medical education centers, making access to care more difficult for rural patients.



### **INSURANCE**

Some treatments may not be covered by insurance. Even if treatment is covered, prior authorizations and high copays can limit access.



### **MEDICATION SHORTAGES**

The availability of key treatments, such as rituximab and intravenous immunoglobulin, varies.



### **LACK OF CLINICAL TRIALS**

Limited awareness and geographic restrictions can prevent patients from participating in new clinical trials.



## Key Takeaways

Pemphigus and pemphigoid are rare, serious autoimmune diseases requiring specialized treatment. Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial for symptom management and complication prevention, but many patients face financial and access barriers. Advocacy, education and research are needed to improve patient outcomes and quality of life.