

Boehringer Ingelheim outlines rare skin disease patient perspectives at the World Congress of Dermatology in Singapore

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Boehringer Ingelheim convened medical expertise over a roundtable forum to raise awareness of a rare skin disease, known as generalized pustular psoriasis (GPP)



On 4 July 2023, at the World Congress of Dermatology Singapore 2023, Boehringer Ingelheim presented patient perspectives, clinical approaches, and mental health concerns associated with Generalized Pustular Psoriasis (GPP) patients.

GPP is a rare, life-threatening skin disease, which is distinct from the more commonly recognized plaque psoriasis. Patients with GPP experience episodes of flares that greatly impact their quality of life and can potentially lead to hospitalization with life-threatening complications.

Dr Colin Theng, President of the Psoriasis Association of Singapore and Councillor with International Psoriasis Council said, "Unlike plaque psoriasis, GPP flares are characterized by episodes of widespread sterile, pus-filled blisters that can occur without warning and with or without any history of plaque psoriasis. It can also be life-threatening. The disease is extremely rare. In Singapore, there are about 40,000 patients with psoriasis, of which, less than one per cent of these patients have GPP."

Because the disease is so rare, healthcare professionals may misdiagnose GPP as the more common plaque psoriasis. On average, the journey to an accurate diagnosis often takes an average of five years, which causes the patient to experience several years of sub-optimal or even incorrect treatment. Frequent misdiagnosis means symptoms are often treated as a contagious infection or plaque psoriasis.

Emmylou, IFPA Ambassador and patient living with GPP for 20 years added that, "Patients not only endure the excruciating physical pain when flares occur, but also tend to withdraw from society to avoid being discriminated against".

Eventually, the forum unveiled The Unwearable Collection™, a four-piece art collection that brings to life the physical and emotional burden of patients living with generalized pustular psoriasis (GPP). Through art and education, the collection seeks to raise awareness and understanding of the disease. First launched in the United States in 2022, the Collection was created by internationally renowned designer, Bart Hess, in partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim. The creative direction of the Collection is inspired by firsthand experiences Hess heard from GPP patients themselves.

“GPP is an under-recognized and under-supported rare disease. Boehringer Ingelheim’s goal with The Unwearable Collection™ is to make the suffering of GPP patients visible to a broad audience. The collection symbolizes the devastating and unpredictable impact of GPP – both physically and emotionally. As a rare disease, GPP is often misdiagnosed and undertreated. It is our hope that by raising awareness around GPP more patients can benefit from better treatment, said Dr Joerg Kreuzer, Head of Medicine, ASEAN, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, Boehringer Ingelheim.