

I Am More Than My...Psoriasis

ALISHA BRIDGES,
28, ATLANTA

"What's on your skin?" Ten-year-old Alisha was mortified as a swim-class friend pointed to the scaly, flaky red patches that covered 90 percent of Alisha's body. Concealing her condition with clothes and makeup became her life's mission for the next 17 years. But no amount of covering up could stop the comments: One boyfriend told her she was a beautiful girl—with ugly skin. A spiteful college roommate spread a rumor that Alisha was contagious. She sank into depression. Finally, last year, after trying countless treatments, she started an Rx med that's left her upper body almost completely clear. But even more healing, she says, has been educating other patients, physicians, and even Congress as a volunteer for the National Psoriasis Foundation.

HAIR AND MAKEUP: MARGINA DEBISI/STUDIO LINDA MARTEL; ALISHA, SARAH AND TIFFANY: EMILY KATE WARREN (LEFT) AND ANICELA MANICURE; ANA MARIA ARTIST; BETTIE/PHOTOGRAPHY; ALESHA, SARAH, TIFFANY; TRENT DRESS



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Peter Yang

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New York

(917) 407-4292

Nicki Silverman: nicki@dsreps.com

Los Angeles

(626) 441-2224

Deborah Schwartz: deb@dsreps.com
Crystal Roberts: crystal@dsreps.com