

Emmerdale actress Deena Payne has finally found a cure for the psoriasis that's plagued her for years

Deena plays busybody post mistress Viv Hope in Emmerdale



With her on-screen husband Bob, played by Antony Auldenshaw

# Flakes of skin fell from my scalp

**D**eena Payne is best known for her role as Emmerdale's Viv Hope, the woman who takes pride in knowing everyone's business. But in real life, she's been suffering from a painful and embarrassing skin condition for the past four years.

Deena, 52, first became aware of the symptoms of psoriasis after flakes of her skin began falling from her scalp. And having her hair brushed every hour or so for the cameras didn't help the problem. 'It started out at the nape of my neck, then spread up the sides and front, so it was always in my hairline,' she recalls.

She tried various medical treatments, but nothing seemed to help. 'I went to see my doctor,

who sent me to a dermatologist,' she says. 'He advised me to try a couple of treatments, which worked at first. But the psoriasis then came back 10 times worse.'

Deena eventually found a natural cure for her ailment from an unlikely source: South Africa. She discovered the Little Herbal Company, which specialises in traditional African remedies, and began taking Simba – a herbal supplement named after the African Shona word for 'strength'. She also started applying the herbal skin cream Themba, meaning 'hope'.

Simba is an African root, similar to a potato plant. It's inedible, but has been used in Africa for years to fight colds and infections. It can be used to treat both an underactive and an overactive immune system – the latter of which causes psoriasis – because it helps to restore normal immune functioning. It also acts as a natural anti-inflammatory. Themba, which

**The psoriasis came back 10 times worse**

## Psoriasis: the facts

**1** Psoriasis is a recurrent condition that affects around two per cent of the population in the UK. It occurs when the body has an overactive immune system which accelerates the usual replacement processes of the skin.

**2** It affects both sexes equally. It may appear for the first time at any age, although it's more likely to appear between the ages of 11 and 45.

**3** It appears as raised red patches of skin covered with silvery scales. Elbows, knees and the scalp are the most common sites. It's often accompanied by irritation and itchiness.

**4** It's thought that a genetic tendency towards the ailment needs to be triggered by such things as injury, throat infection, certain drugs and physical or emotional stress.

**5** There are many topical treatments available.



The condition causes scaly, itchy areas on the skin

is also used as a traditional remedy to treat dry skin conditions, is made from the pod of the kigelia tree, to which is added aloe excelsia, calendula, wheatgerm oil, lavender and vitamin E.

'I'm certainly much better since using the products,' says Deena. 'I still take one tablet of Simba a day. It took about eight months or so for everything to

clear up, but my scalp is finally clear of psoriasis.' ■

Neil Hughes

You can buy Simba, €26.50 for 90 tablets, and Themba, 13.49 for 30ml, from the Little Herbal Company (0870 850678) or [www.littleherbal.co.uk](http://www.littleherbal.co.uk)

