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New Study Gives Prevalence and Severity Insights to Atopic Dermatitis

About 40% of Adult Patients Have Moderate to Severe Symptoms

October 3, 2018, WASHINGTON, DC – In honor of Eczema Awareness Month, today the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) announces its *Atopic Dermatitis in America* study – which provides one of the most reliable estimates to-date of the prevalence of atopic dermatitis (AD) in individuals 18 and older. Although often thought of as a disease of childhood, the study finds that AD occurs in 7.3% of US adults. Of those affected with the disease, about 40% have moderate or severe AD.

Atopic dermatitis—the most common form of eczema—leads to significant emotional burden in addition to pain, physical discomfort and sleep disturbance for 16.5 million adults in the U.S. It is a chronic, inflammatory skin disease which results in widespread rashes and patches of itchy skin. Scratching may cause thickened, cracked, dry, scaly, raw, sensitive or swollen skin.

“One of the most alarming things we found is that, despite the common occurrence of atopic dermatitis, 6.6 million adults are dealing with moderate to severe symptoms,” says Kenneth Mendez, president and CEO of AAFA. “We need to escalate our efforts to make sure that people are informed and have access to the right medication.”

AAFA’s comprehensive study has led to a greater understanding of the prevalence of the disease in adults and its harmful impacts on those affected by it. The study has generated 5 manuscripts so far, which are available at www.ADinAmerica.org.

“The Atopic Dermatitis in America study indicates the need for public health initiatives to improve eczema recognition and treatment,” states Dr. Zelma Chiesa Fuxench, one of the study authors. “Atopic dermatitis is often considered a childhood condition. More recent research, including this study, confirms that many adults are suffering from this disease.”

There is no cure for AD, and many people have troubling controlling it. While there are many medical and non-medical treatments used to manage AD, they are not all effective. The treatments can be inconvenient and may cause toxic side effects. As a result, many with AD fail to seek and comply with medical treatment.

“We hope the AD in America campaign will increase public awareness about the prevalence of this disease in our country and lead to better treatments and a cure,” said Julie Block, President and CEO of the [National Eczema Association](http://www.nationaleczema.org) (NEA), a partner on the study. “After a decade of no



new treatments, finally, the true impact on patients' quality of life is receiving the light and attention it deserves.”

About the Study

Beginning in 2016, AAFA led a three-part national study about AD in the U.S. in partnership with NEA and with support from Sanofi Genzyme and Regeneron. The study included three survey populations:

- The general public (“Public Survey”)
- Adults with AD (“Patient Survey”)
- Health care professionals who care for patients with AD (“Physician Survey”)

The purpose of the study, entitled ***Atopic Dermatitis in America***, was to:

- Establish the prevalence of AD in the U.S. adult population
- Determine the distribution of adult AD disease severity
- Understand the burden of disease for adults with AD

About AAFA

Celebrating 65 years of service, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA provides practical information and community-based services through its digital communities and network of chapters and support groups. Through its [Kids With Food Allergies](#) division, AAFA offers the most extensive online support community for families of children with food allergies. AAFA also helps consumers identify household products that are proven to improve indoor environments for people with asthma and allergies through the [asthma & allergy friendly® Certification Program](#). For more information, visit www.aafa.org.