

New study shows eczema in African-Americans is more difficult to treat

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Those who suffer with atopic dermatitis (AD) - also known as eczema—know it can be an uphill battle to find the right treatment. Symptoms include severe itching, scaly rashes, extreme dry skin and inflammation. And that battle can be more difficult for African Americans with the condition.

A new study published in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*, the scientific journal of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, suggests that African Americans have greater treatment challenges with AD than European Americans and require higher doses of some medications to get relief.

"Research shows about 19 percent of African Americans and 16 percent of European Americans are diagnosed with AD," says Emma Guttman-Yassky, MD, Ph.D., lead author of the paper. "Our study found there are significant differences in the skin of people with AD than in those without the condition. Furthermore, we found African Americans with AD have more inflammation than European Americans with the condition."

Molecular profiling of skin is being used to develop newer, more effective treatments for people with AD. However, only European Americans with AD have been involved in the development of this profiling technique. "This study looked for differences in the molecular profile of the skin of African Americans with AD compared to the skin of European Americans with AD to determine if there are differences that might improve treatment options for African Americans," said Dr. Guttman-Yassky. "The results indicated that the immune profile was more unbalanced in African Americans with AD compared to European Americans."

This is the first molecular study of the [skin](#) of African Americans with AD looking for differences that could explain variances in the severity of their condition and response to similar treatments.

"This may prove to be a valuable enhancement for treatment options for African Americans with AD," says allergist Donald Leung, MD, Ph.D., executive editor of *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*. "It will also reinforce the importance of racial diversity in clinical research studies for effective [treatment](#) for AD"

Anyone suffering with AD should consider seeing an allergist as allergists specialize in treating allergic diseases like AD. To find an allergist near you who can help create a personal plan to deal with your allergies, asthma or atopic dermatitis, use the ACAAI [allergist](#) locator.

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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