

# Skin diseases take big slice out of America's health, economy

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(HealthDay)—Skin diseases have a major impact on Americans and the

U.S. economy, a new report finds.

"The impact of skin disease in this country is staggering, affecting one in every four Americans each year and taking a toll on lives, livelihoods and our economy," said study leader Dr. Henry Lim, incoming president of the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD).

For the report, AAD researchers looked at medical claims data from 2013 on 24 skin diseases, and estimated that more than 85 million Americans are affected.

People may think [skin conditions](#) aren't particularly serious, but half of the skin diseases included in the research could result in death. Skin cancers accounted for 60 percent of skin disease-related deaths, according to the report.

The number of people in the United States with skin diseases in 2013 was higher than those with heart disease, diabetes or kidney failure. That year, 26 percent of Americans reported receiving treatment for at least one skin disease, according to an academy news release.

Nearly half of Americans older than 65 have a skin disease, with an average of 2.2 [skin diseases](#) each, the researchers found.

Costs are also a big concern. In 2013, the United States spent \$75 billion on these skin conditions. Most of this was for treatment, including \$46 billion in [health care provider](#) costs.

That year, skin disease patients and their caregivers experienced \$11 billion in lost productivity. This doesn't include additional time for at-home care and treatment, the report said.

The findings were published in the March 1 *Journal of the American*

*Academy of Dermatology*, and are in the first of a series of reports from the AAD. The report is tied to the academy's new [skin](#) disease awareness campaign called SkinSerious.

**More information:** SOURCE: American Academy of Dermatology, news release, March 1, 2017

For more on SkinSerious, visit the [American Academy of Dermatology](#).

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