

Children with worse atopic dermatitis more likely to have learning disabilities

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(HealthDay)—Worse atopic dermatitis (AD) severity is associated with

increased odds of learning disorders in pediatric patients, according to a study published online April 14 in *JAMA Dermatology*.

Joy Wan, M.D., from the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine in Philadelphia, and colleagues used data from 2,074 participants (aged 2 to 17 years) in the Pediatric Eczema Elective Registry with a physician-confirmed diagnosis of AD and 10 years of follow-up.

The researchers found that 8.2 percent of participants reported a diagnosis of a learning disability. Children with a learning disability were more likely to have worse AD severity, as measured by the median total Patient-Oriented Eczema Measure (POEM) score, POEM severity category, and self-report. Participants with mild AD (odds ratio, 1.72), moderate AD (odds ratio, 2.09), and severe to very severe AD (odds ratio, 3.10) on the POEM were all significantly more likely to report a learning disability versus participants with clear or almost clear skin, after adjusting for sex, age, race/ethnicity, annual household income, age of AD onset, family history of AD, and comorbid conditions.

"The findings suggest that children with more [severe](#) AD should be screened for learning difficulties to initiate appropriate interventions that can mitigate the consequences of a [learning disability](#)," the authors write.

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