

# Atopic dermatitis linked to shorter stature in early childhood

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(HealthDay)—Atopic dermatitis is associated with shorter stature, higher

body mass index (BMI), and lower weight in early childhood, according to a study published online Nov. 17 in *JAMA Dermatology*.

Matthew N. Nicholas, M.D., from the University of Toronto, and colleagues examined the associations of atopic dermatitis with height, BMI, and weight throughout childhood in a longitudinal cohort study. Children ages 5 years or younger were followed into adolescence from June 2008 to February 2021. The analysis included 10,611 children who were followed for a median of 28.5 months.

The researchers found that 17.3 percent of children had atopic dermatitis during follow-up. Compared with children without atopic dermatitis, there were associations seen for atopic dermatitis with lower length-for-age z score, higher BMI z score, and [lower weight](#)-for-age z score ( $-0.13$ ,  $0.05$ , and  $-0.07$ , respectively). With age, the associations between atopic dermatitis and height and BMI varied, decreasing by age 14 and 5.5 years, respectively. After adjustment for covariates, [children](#) with versus those without atopic dermatitis were 0.5 cm shorter with 0.2 more BMI units at age 2 years, and they were 0.6 cm shorter with no difference in BMI at age 5 years. With respect to weight, there was no evidence of an interaction between atopic dermatitis and age.

"Prospective studies with longer time horizons are needed to measure longer-term associations and to evaluate the potential mediating effects of [atopic dermatitis](#) disease severity, associated sleep disturbance, and treatment," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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