

Black and Hispanic children in the US have more severe eczema than white children

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While research shows Black and Hispanic children suffer disproportionately with asthma, other allergic diseases have also been found to be more prevalent in those groups. A presentation at this year's virtual American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting reveals the disparities that exist for Black and Hispanic children when it comes to Atopic Dermatitis (AD), commonly known as eczema.

"Not only do Black children in the U.S. have significantly higher incidence of AD and more nights of disturbed sleep compared to [white children](#), their AD also tends to last longer into childhood," says dermatologist Jonathan Silverberg, MD, presenter at the meeting. "In addition, Black children and adults with AD are more likely to have an [emergency department](#) or urgent care visit for AD and be hospitalized for AD."

Allergists and other health care specialists who treat AD recognize the need to approach the issue of health disparities with increased education, innovation, and evidence-based solutions.

"AD looks different on black and brown skin than it does on white skin," says allergist Luz Fonacier, MD, ACAAI president-elect. "Unfortunately, the textbooks from which [medical students](#) learn often don't contain images of AD in Black and Hispanic patients, and that's something we are looking to change. When AD in Black and Hispanic patients goes undiagnosed due to lack of education on the part of the medical community, getting positive treatment outcomes becomes even more difficult."

Dr. Silverberg's presentation outlined potential solutions to helping minorities get the treatment they need for skin allergies. Among the suggestions:

- Increased diversity of physicians and staff.
- Increased local community engagement to

build trust.

- Expand office hours to nights and weekend to increase access.
- Have flexible appointment slots to allow for urgent visits.
- 24-hour telephone coverage for patients.
- Telehealth visits to reduce travel and lost productivity.
- Spend adequate time to educate patients about their disease and treatment course.

Says Dr. Silverberg, "We need to pay special attention to minorities when it comes to treating skin allergies because how these conditions appear on a person's skin varies, and the treatment will also vary. We need to consider all patients' individual needs."

More information: Presentation Title: Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Allergy/Immunology Populations

Presenter: Jonathan Silverberg, MD

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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