

Atopic dermatitis across the globe: differences in prevalence and access to treatments

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Atopic dermatitis (AD) is a chronic disease that causes itchy skin and is the most common form of eczema. AD affects children and adults worldwide. Advances have been made towards understanding the disease better and many new therapies have been developed.

This review article describes how common AD is worldwide, and examines the differences that exist in various

populations and regions. It looks at the reasons this might be the case. There are strong environmental influences, for example, warm, humid climates could be protective for AD. However, there are also very important differences caused by inconsistencies in access to healthcare and the quality of care provided among racial and ethnic minority groups. An example is that access to newer systemic agents (oral and injected medications that work throughout the entire body) is well established in North America, the UK, Europe, the Middle East and Australia whereas people in Africa and South America having little to no access to these treatments.

The authors conclude that identifying all the factors driving these differences in healthcare among various ethnic groups is central to improve patient care and treatment outcomes.