

Understanding atopic dermatitis: Pathophysiology and etiology—Introduction

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Atopic dermatitis (AD) is an inflammatory skin disease that constitutes a significant burden to patients and their families. It currently affects 10% to 15% of children in many parts of the world and its prevalence is rapidly increasing. We are still far from fully understanding this disease. The objective of this meeting was to bring leading international

experts, scientists, and clinicians together, to discuss and build consensus on various aspects of the pathophysiology and epidemiology of AD. The first part of the meeting concentrated on what we understand about the disease, discussing natural history, the clinical spectrum and genetics, the immune system, the skin barrier, and the skin lipid function in AD. The second part of the meeting was dedicated to the disease and its environment, focusing on the role of environmental and social factors with regard to disease frequency, prevalence, and trends for exacerbation, as well as on the impact of AD on quality of life. One of the specific aims of the meeting was to come to a consensus on whether AD in adults and children is the same disease or two different diseases.

It is planned to continue this type of symposium on AD into the future, the next meeting focusing on the clinical aspects of AD, especially the state of the art in disease management.

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