

MEDIA RELEASE

September 2010



'bee eczema educated!'

Eczema Awareness Week

6th to 12th September 2010

Nearly a third of Australians suffer with eczema at some stage in their lives – equivalent to almost six million people.¹ The incidence of the disease is on the rise, tripling in recent years.^{2,3} While for most Australians spring is a time for enjoying the outdoors, for eczema sufferers it can be a time of social isolation, the Eczema Association of Australasia Inc. (EAA) warns. Although there is no cure, managing the skin disease can improve quality of life states the EAA, who today launched Eczema Awareness Week 2010 (6-12 September).

There are several types of eczema, the most common being 'atopic eczema' (also called 'atopic dermatitis'). Triggers which can cause eczema to flare during spring include pollens, grasses, the heat/humidity and shedding pet fur. Even air-conditioning is a trigger, as it dries out people's skin.

"Spring is often a really stressful time for children and adults alike with eczema," said Ms Cheryl Talent, President of the EAA. We receive so many calls each spring from people who have trouble managing their eczema. As a result, many people stay indoors to avoid the extra triggers present at this time of year. Spring is a good time to reassess your skin-care regime, your condition and its triggers," said Ms Talent. "If you take the appropriate precautions, it can be the difference between keeping your eczema under control and having a major flare."

The EAA recommends managing eczema can be achieved by the following:

- Obtain the correct diagnosis by visiting your local GP who can provide a referral to a specialist if needed;
- Using a suitable topical cortisone cream for flares;
- Daily maintenance of skin using soap-free washes/hypoallergenic bath oils and lots of moisturizer - visit your local Pharmacist who can offer advice on suitable skin products;
- Taking probiotics
- Modifying diet
- Reducing stress

"If you have eczema, it's so important that you find a health professional who you feel comfortable with and who is knowledgeable about eczema. The EAA is also a really good resource for information about keeping your eczema under control," Ms Talent said.

The EAA is currently undertaking a lifestyle survey of Australians with eczema, with the aim of identifying how eczema affects the population and the most effective types of treatments and products. People can complete the survey and find out more about Eczema Awareness Week by visiting the EAA website: www.eczema.org.au or by telephoning 1300 300 182.

As the proud sponsor of Eczema Awareness Week and to celebrate the launch of Cetaphil® RESTORADERM™, Skin Restoring Wash & Moisturiser. Cetaphil® will be donating \$1 for every RESTORADERM™, product sold during the month of September to the Eczema Association of Australasia Inc.

ENDS

Experts available for media interviews:

- 1. Dr Phillip Artemi - Dermatologist**
- 2. Cheryl Talent – President of the EAA**

For more information and images, or to arrange an interview please contact Lisa-Shae Butler at Niche Marketing Group on (02) 8585 4319 or via lisab@nichegroup.com.au

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References:

1. Marks R.. *Atlas of Common Skin Diseases in Australia*, Department of Dermatology, St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne. 1999
2. Mar A. & Marks R. The descriptive epidemiology of atopic dermatitis in the community, *Australian Journal of Dermatology*. 1999
3. Rosen R. *Skin Solutions*. Information sheet published by Galderma Australia. 2001
4. Eczema Association of Australasia Inc. Survey Database (2003)