



INTERNATIONAL ECZEMA COUNCIL

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Letter from the IEC President



Since Drs. Amy Paller and Emma Guttman founded the IEC in 2014, our progress in less than a decade is nothing short of remarkable and is thanks to our dedicated directors, Councilors, and Associates.

Expanding our global reach is key to the achievement of our goals, and this year, we've extended our reach significantly through one of our most publicly visible activities: our symposia.

These events are educational sessions led by expert faculty (usually IEC Councilors and Associates) in conjunction with major world meetings focused on dermatology and/or allergy. These symposia can be a major boon to attendees of the bigger meetings; they're able to add on hours of additional, specialty learning at little to no cost.

Our symposia have always been of very high quality, mixing the latest research and clinical applications from key experts practicing in a variety of settings around the world. We're only through the second quarter and our Councilors and Associates have already organized and presented symposia at four major world meetings on three continents.

- We presented a symposium as part of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) 2023 Annual Meeting for the first time ever. **[New Developments in Atopic Dermatitis and Implications for the Atopic March](#)** was February 23 in San Antonio, TX, USA. The session is available to watch as an **[on-demand webcast](#)**.
- We returned to the American Academy of Dermatology's Global Education Day on March 16, in New Orleans, LA, USA, with **[Prurigo Nodularis](#)**. Watch the **[on-demand webcast](#)** if you weren't able to attend. This presentation was very positively received by dermatologists and members of the industry.
- Our symposium **[Pathophysiological Insights into AD and New Therapeutic Developments](#)** helped kick off the first International Society for Investigative Dermatology meeting on May 10 in Tokyo, Japan. Our reputation preceded us, resulting in a packed room for this 3-hour event. The recording will be available soon to watch on our **[On-Demand Webcasts page](#)**.
- And on May 26, we presented in person for the first time at Reunión Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos (RADLA) after our inaugural participation at the 2022 all-virtual meeting. This year, our IEC Councilors presented **[Pathophysiology, Diagnosis and Treatment of Atopic Comorbidities](#)** in AD Patients on May 26 in Curitiba, Brazil. I want especially to thank program chairs Valeria Aoki, MD PhD, and Fernando Valenzuela, MD, as well Raquel Leão Orfali, MD, for their dedication to ensuring this first in-person RADLA event welcomed and benefited all attendees. The **[On-Demand Webcasts page](#)** will be updated with the recording of this session soon.

Now, we're preparing for symposia at three more major meetings in 2023, and adding another continent to our travels. Still to come this year, we have education planned for the:

- **World Congress of Dermatology: [Global Perspectives in AD: Non-Atopic Challenges in Atopic Dermatitis Patients](#)** is our symposium on 3 July in Singapore. We have an impressive lineup of faculty for this program, which is chaired by Nick Reynolds, MD FRCP, and Jeff Yu, MD. This has the potential to be a highly attended event as the overall WCD event nears 10,000 registrants. "Sister society meetings" like ours start the event, and the IEC meeting is the first item on the WCD calendar. If you haven't registered already but plan to attend, you can join us and register on site in Singapore.
- **European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology Congress: [Pruritus in Patients with Atopic Dermatitis](#)** will be presented on 14 October in Berlin, Germany. IEC Councilors Sonja Ständer, MD, and Gil Yosipovitch, MD FAAD, are the program chairs for this event. We've posted the learning objectives, agenda, faculty, and presentation titles on our **[EADV symposium page](#)**. We'll present in the same venue hosting EADV, on the afternoon of the last day of the meeting. The IEC has presented a symposium in conjunction with EADV annually since 2016.
- **Inflammatory Skin Disease Summit (ISDS): [Basic Research Techniques in Atopic Dermatitis](#)** will be on 15 November, from 13:00-16:00, in Vienna, Austria. ISDS began hosting their biennial meetings the same year that the IEC was founded, in 2014, and this will be the fourth time the IEC has presented a symposium in conjunction with ISDS's meeting.

We achieved a lot of "firsts" this year, including our first symposia at AAAAI and ISID and our first in-person symposium at RADLA. Overall, we're also presenting more symposia at more international meetings, bringing together more expert physicians to teach the latest research, clinical applications, and reaching more professionals from around the globe.

These symposia are the most visible aspect of how much the IEC is achieving, but as our Councilors, Associates, and industry partners know, we're furthering the management of atopic dermatitis through many other methods as well, including undertaking research and furthering physicians' professional development.

I invite you to engage further with our council to advance our shared goals. Together, there is so much we can achieve.

The IEC's First Live Presentation at RADLA





IEC Councilor Fernando Valenzuela (above) begins his presentation during the IEC symposium **Pathophysiology, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Atopic Comorbidities in Atopic Dermatitis Patients** on 26 May at the Reunião Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos (RADLA) in Curitiba, Brazil.

IEC Councilor Valeria Aoki (at right in top left photo) welcomed all participants to her country for our first live RADLA program, which she cochaired with Dr. Valenzuela. The two also presented as faculty, along with **IEC Councilors Paula Luna, Raquel Leão Orfali** (at left in top left photo), and **Sandipan Dhar**. The IEC thanks Dr. Aoki for her efforts toward our success.

The IEC's first in-person presentation at RADLA, the symposium was well received, with some attendees even posing for photos with faculty (at left).

IEC Fellowship Program Leads to Award

Being chosen as an IEC Fellow has led to an award for Dr. Sheng-Pei Wang. Dr. Wang, a fellow in the IEC's 2022-2023 clinical fellowship program, recently was honored as a recipient of the American Dermato-Epidemiology Network (ADEN) Trainee Award. The ADEN Trainee Award acknowledges trainees who have made significant strides in the field through their exceptional research, publications, and presentations.

Dr. Wang completed her dermatology clinical training in Taiwan before embarking on a path of basic science research and public health training in the US and received her master's of public health at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Wang was selected as part of the second class of fellows for **IEC's fellowship program**, which pairs qualified early-career physicians with experienced IEC Councilors to help the new physicians develop a greater understanding of AD, acquire research skills, and improve their ability to manage patients with AD. Dr. Wang was paired with IEC Councilor Dr. Lawrence Eichenfield as her mentor in the program.



INTERNATIONAL ECZEMA COUNCIL
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Background
 Environmental factors have been shown repeatedly to have impacts on disease onset and course of atopic dermatitis (AD). However, the extent to which climate change impacts AD remains unclear.

Objective
 To review the literature on climate change and AD.

Methods
 • Narrative review of the literature and a systematic search for studies focused on AD and 10 climatic hazards linked to greenhouse gas emissions (warming, heat waves, wildfires, drought, precipitation, storms, floods, sea level rise, ocean climate change, and land cover change).
 • Maps were created to show the global cumulative exposure to climatic hazards based on data from Mora et al.¹⁷

Results
 17 studies with primary data that examined associations between AD and climatic hazards were identified (Table 1). They focused on healthcare utilization related to AD (n=7), AD severity and flares (n=5), AD prevalence (n=3), and google search volume index for AD-related terms (n=1).

Discussion
 All climatic hazards studied had theoretical or empirical evidence for aggravation of AD, whereas there was minimal evidence for improvement of AD.

Figure 1. Geographic distribution of data on climatic hazards and AD

Number of studies collecting data in each country
 4 3 2 1

4 studies were from the United States, 4 were from Asia (India, South Korea, Taiwan), 2 were from European countries (France, Italy, Portugal), 3 were from Africa (Libya, Nigeria), and 1 used global data from the ISAAC Phase Three Study.

Figure 2. Most significant cumulative exposure to climate hazards was found to occur in the tropics, particularly in coastal regions

Cumulative Exposure to Climate Hazards, 2017

The CCH is a relative indication of the extent to which the largest changes in the 10 specific climatic hazards included in our study will occur in any given location on the globe.

Figure 3. Summary of literature on the underlying mechanisms linking climatic hazards and AD flares

This diagram summarizes the adverse effects of the 10 climatic hazards on AD and only depicts the studied and theoretical associations identified in the 17 studies included in our review. We did not include additional known or theoretical connections between factors that have been studied in other contexts.

Research gaps and suggestions for future research

- Most studies examine only a limited number of climatic factors; future work should aim to integrate multiple climatic factors.
- Most studies examine AD health care utilization or disease activity; future work should examine impacts on AD incidence, prevalence, and long-term monitoring of disease activity over time at the individual level.
- Most studies come from the US; future work should include a wider geographic distribution, especially among areas most impacted by climate change.
- Most studies focus on either basic mechanisms or epidemiology; studies that can integrate mechanisms with population-level factors (i.e. examining how FLG mutations interact with air pollution) can lead to interventions to improve health.
- It is unclear how the demographics and other characteristics of patient populations with AD vary by level of impact from climate changes; future work should consider the differential impact of climate change on different sub-populations.

References Wang C, McKenzie T, Gao H, et al. One half of known human pathogenic diseases can be aggravated by climate change. *Nature Climate Change*. 2022;12:1042-1071.

Conflict of interest statement The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Click the poster image to view the original.

The fellowship later led to Dr. Wang becoming lead author of a poster based on IEC research that was accepted for presentation in May at the 2023 Meeting of the International Societies for Investigative Dermatology (ISID).

At the live meeting in Tokyo, Japan, Dr. Wang presented the poster **Impact of Climate Change on Atopic Dermatitis: A Systematic Search and Review by the International Eczema Council** (click the link for a button to view the poster).

The poster summarizes a systematic search investigating the impact of 10 climatic hazards on atopic dermatitis. The study found that all the studied climatic hazards had theoretical or empirical evidence for aggravating different aspects of atopic dermatitis, including pathogenesis, prevalence, healthcare utilization, and disease severity, with minimal evidence for improvement. Direct, indirect, and synergistic effects are identified.

Other authors of the poster include **IEC Councilors Katrina Abuabara, Valeria Aoki, Sara J. Brown, Sandipan Dhar, Lawrence Eichenfield, Carsten Flohr, Alan Irvine, Jenny E. Murase, and Jacob P. Thyssen** and **IEC Associate Raquel Leão Orfali**.

The abstract's acceptance at ISID made Dr. Wang a candidate for the ADEN Trainee Award, and she was delighted to learn was chosen as a recipient.

Dr. Wang credits the IEC and its Councilors for much of her recent success. "The fellowship experience and the opportunity to work with many IEC Councilors truly solidifies my career goal to be an academic dermatologist specializing in eczema and fuels me to keep going when it gets hard," she said. "None of these would have been possible without you all at the IEC, Katrina Abuabara, Alan Irvine, and Larry Eichenfield. Thank you SO much!"

Renewing Connections at ISID in Japan



IEC Councilor Dr. Lin Ma (second from left) of Beijing, China, connects with **IEC President Dr. Robert Bissonnette** (center), of Montréal, Canada, and **IEC CEO Alan Stiles** (fourth from left) at IEC symposium on 10 May at the International Society for Investigative Dermatology (ISID) meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

Dr. Ma is professor and chair of the Department of Dermatology at Beijing Children's Hospital of Capital Medical University. She was joined by her colleagues Dr. Liu (left) and Dr. Wang (right).

Three IEC Councilors Honored with ASA Awards

The American Skin Association (ASA) recently honored IEC Councilors **Jon Hanifin, MD**; **Masayuki Amagai, MD PhD**; and **Kenji Kabashima, MD PhD**, at the International Societies for Investigative Dermatology (ISID) meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

- Dr. Hanifin received the 2023 David Martin Carter Mentor Award. He is an inaugural IEC Councilor and professor emeritus of Dermatology at Oregon Health and Sciences University's School of Medicine in Portland, OR, USA. His global reputation as an expert in atopic dermatitis (AD) research is well-deserved. His

extensive contributions include delivering lectures worldwide and playing a pivotal role in directing symposiums dedicated to advancing knowledge in this field. IEC founder and Past President **Amy Paller, MD**, was the 2021 recipient of the David Martin Carter Mentor Award.

- Dr. Amagai, of Keio University School of Medicine in Toyko, Japan, was honored as the inaugural recipient of the George W. Hambrick Award. Dr. Amagai's research focus on pathophysiological mechanisms of pemphigus, peripheral tolerance, skin barrier homeostasis, and the impact of impaired skin barrier on the onset of AD and other allergic disorders has significantly contributed to our understanding of these conditions.
- Dr. Kabashima was named a recipient of an ASA Research Achievement Award, which honors established scientists in investigative dermatology and cutaneous biology. He received the 2023 Research Achievement Award in Autoimmune and Inflammatory Skin Disorders. Dr. Kabashima serves on the IEC Board of Directors, as secretary, and is a professor in the Department of Dermatology at Kyoto University Graduate School of Medicine in Kyoto, Japan.

“ASA is honored to recognize Dr. Hanifin and Dr. Amagai and all the 2023 Research Achievement Award recipients for their tireless efforts in the field of dermatology,” ASA Chair Howard P. Milstein said. “Their work is vital to finding long-sought-after cures.”

The IEC congratulates our Councilors on these achievements. See more about the awards and the association at americanskin.org.

Meet the Associate: Yael Renert-Yuval, MD MSc

This issue's 'Meet the Associate' features IEC Associate Yael Renert-Yuval, MD MSc.



A scientist and clinician, Dr. Renert-Yuval is an attending dermatologist in the largest pediatric dermatology unit in Israel, situated at Schneider Children's Medical Center, which is affiliated with Tel Aviv University.

She previously was a dermatologist and physician-scientist in the Laboratory for Investigative Dermatology at The Rockefeller University in New York, NY, USA.

She is an author on more than 40 journal articles and was the lead author on the IEC article [Biomarkers in Atopic Dermatitis, a Review on Behalf of the International Eczema Council](#). She frequently collaborates with IEC cofounder and Past President Emma Guttman, MD PhD, as a coauthor. Atopic dermatitis has been a central focus of her research.

Her ultimate career objective is to enhance patient care by applying cutting-edge scientific and clinical research, leveraging the diverse array of tools she has acquired through years of extensive exploration in the field.

What is your proudest accomplishment in the atopic dermatitis (AD) space?

My special interest in AD has been pediatric AD, and since 2015 I was fortunate to join a large project lead by two leading investigators in the field, Dr. Amy Paller and Dr. Emma Guttman-Yassky (who has been a personal mentor throughout my career).

In this project we extensively studied a variety of samples, including full-depth skin biopsies, blood, and non-invasive tape strips from AD patients across different pediatric age groups along with age-matched controls. These experiments allowed us to delineate the molecular evolution of AD from infancy through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood and better understand the common and unique molecular feature in each of these age groups.

What do you value most about being involved with the IEC?

I highly appreciate the chance to be part of a team that stands at the forefront of AD clinical management and research, encompassing both clinical and mechanistic aspects. Being a member of this diverse group, which focuses on various facets of this intricate disease, I constantly find myself gaining knowledge about interesting AD elements that typically lie beyond the scope of my daily practice or research. These include areas such as AD scoring, biomarkers, the effects of climate on the disease, and innovative clinical strategies and guidelines.

What do you think will garner the most attention over the coming year in the AD field?

I think the extensive pipeline of AD therapeutics will continue to unfold into clinically available drugs and agents. This remarkable progress will enable us to attain unprecedented levels of clinical outcomes. Consequently, it will present the field with the challenge of establishing novel management approaches to guide clinicians in selecting the optimal treatment for moderate-to-severe AD patients and in determining when treatment adjustments are necessary. Monitoring patients and evaluating their response will play a crucial role, utilizing both clinical and tissue-based assessments.

Additionally, maintaining a sustained response poses a challenge with new therapeutics due to limited data on long-term results. Moreover, these new therapeutics will gradually enter the realm of pediatric AD, an area that currently faces greater difficulty in treatment, necessitating age-based adjustments to improve the care of our younger patients.

What do you see as the biggest need among AD patients?

I currently practice in Israel and mostly see children with AD in a large tertiary pediatric center. In this setting, one of the most significant challenges my patients face is limited access to the new therapeutics. Currently, payers in Israel consider these treatments as second- or third-line options only when systemic interventions become necessary.

Additionally, I strongly believe that there exists an unmet need for patients across all age groups to actively participate in assessing and guiding their own clinical management. This aspect holds immense importance and may be enhanced through innovative strategies such as the treat-to-target approach, which we are currently investigating as part of an IEC project in the context of AD.

Get to know other Councilors and Associates by reading [past Meet the Councilor features](#).

National Eczema Association Research Grants: Applications Due July 31



NATIONAL Eczema ASSOCIATION

The 2023 **National Eczema Association (NEA) research grant cycle** is now open. As NEA celebrates its 20th anniversary of supporting groundbreaking research, they are committed to awarding up to \$1 million in research funding.

This is an exceptional opportunity for researchers in the field of atopic dermatitis. **Explore the full program description** and apply by July 31. For additional information, please refer to NEA's **frequently asked questions** or email **grants@nationaleczema.org**.

[Learn More & Apply](#)

Save the Dates for Remaining 2023 IEC Symposia at Major World Meetings



3 July | WCD in Singapore

On 3 July, the IEC symposium **Non-Atopic Challenges in Atopic Dermatitis Patients** will take place as a sister society meeting prior to the 25th World Congress of Dermatology (WCD) in Singapore. Our symposium, held from 08:30-12:30, will discuss comorbidities that you might see in your patients, such as contact allergies, obesity, metabolic issues, and mental health concerns.

This year's WCD meeting will be at the same venue as our symposium, the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre. Councilors, Associates, and industry liaisons have been invited to an invitation-only IEC meeting that will be held after the morning symposium.



14 October | EADV in Germany

In Berlin, Germany, the IEC will present **Pruritus in Patients with Atopic Dermatitis** 14:15-17:30 (2:15-5:30 pm) CET on Saturday, 14 October, at the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) Congress.

Presentations on pruritus and prurigo will be held in the Messe Berlin congress center Hall A1 in the morning as part of EADV before the IEC symposium begins in the same hall in the afternoon.

If you plan to attend the EADV meeting, too, discounts on registration are available through 6 September.



15 November | ISDS in Austria

In November, the Inflammatory Skin Disease Summit (ISDS) will offer a unique and dynamic program in Vienna, Austria. The theme is The Translational Revolution.

The IEC's symposium, **Basic Research Techniques in AD**, will be on 15 November, from 13:00 to 16:00, prior to the ISDS meeting, and at the same venue, the Aula der Wissenschaften, Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Registration will open as the meeting date approaches on our [event page](#).



About the IEC

The **International Eczema Council** (IEC) is a global nonprofit organization led by dermatology experts on atopic dermatitis (AD). The IEC is dedicated to increasing the understanding of AD and promoting its optimal management through research, education and patient/family care. The IEC comprises 127 Councilors and Associates from 29 countries who contribute their expertise to support the IEC's research, programs, events, and education.