

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Vicki Kalabokes
Interim Chief Executive Officer
415-499-3474
email: vicki@naaf.org
or info@nationaleczema.org

Inaugural Conference to Focus on Atopic Dermatitis/Eczema Patients

San Rafael, CA (July 1, 2004) The Inaugural Patient Conference of the National Eczema Association for Science and Education (NEASE) will mark an important milestone toward the goal of increasing public awareness and understanding of this devastating disease. It is estimated that 10 percent of the American population has some form of atopic dermatitis/eczema.

Scheduled for Friday to Sunday, July 16-18, at the Crystal City Marriott in Arlington, VA, the conference stands as a testament to the value of advocacy and the power of collaboration. The three-day event will bring together patients, medical experts, and NEASE advocates in a forum designed to educate, motivate, comfort, and foster interaction. Highlights of the conference will include Capitol Hill Visits to educate legislators in the challenges associated with addressing this disease and to advocate for increased funds for medical research; a dozen-plus Theme Support Sessions on topics of interest to patients and their families; a Children's Conference Camp designed especially for Kids, Tweens, and Teens; and the opportunity to break through the social isolation that so often accompanies atopic dermatitis/eczema.

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Two of Saturday's speakers, Dr. Lisa Beck of Johns Hopkins Asthma and Allergy Center, and Dr. Jon Hanifin of the Oregon Health and Science University, are Principal Investigators with a new nationwide research group launched May 19, 2004 by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This new group, the Atopic Dermatitis and Vaccinia Network (ADVNI) will focus on reducing the risk of eczema vaccinatum (EV), a severe and potentially deadly complication of smallpox immunization experienced by atopic dermatitis/eczema patients. The conference will provide a perfect opportunity for exchanging such critical information.

Both Dr. Hanifin and Dr. Beck are also members of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the National Eczema Association for Science and Education.

The mission of the National Eczema Association for Science and Education is to work to improve the health and the quality of life of all persons living with atopic dermatitis/eczema, providing emotional support, information, and resources to those who have the disease as well as their loved ones, while raising public awareness of the disease.

To learn more about the NEASE organization and the upcoming Inaugural Patient Conference, please contact the National Eczema Association for Science and Education office at 800-818-7546 in San Rafael, CA, or visit the NEASE Web site at www.nationaleczema.org.

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