



E-Insights

October 2009

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Dear Friends of NEA,

You've been seeing quite a few pictures of our family lately! We were honored to be featured on the cover of *The Advocate* newsletter at the beginning of the year. Our daughters loved seeing their photo in the National Eczema Association 2008 Annual Report and several places on the NEA website.



We are an eczema family. Matt, Claire (age 8) and Natalie (age 6) battle eczema in various degrees. Eczema affects Natalie most severely. We were lucky to find NEA after countless hours of looking for answers and help online. We felt a great amount of relief and hope knowing there were other families like ours.

We attended our first eczema patient conference in San Diego in 2008. We were incredibly impressed with the warm welcome and instant bond we felt with NEA staff as well as other families struggling to learn and cope with this disease. The kids made great friends at the Children's Camp, and we received compassionate advice and tips from NEA Board members, physicians, nurses and other medical professionals in attendance. We knew then that we had found something special in NEA.

Since the conference, we've committed ourselves to helping other eczema families in small, but meaningful ways. Sharing our photos, hosting a yard sale to benefit NEA, and letting others know about the support, education and research programs are ways we can give back and make a difference for the future.

Please consider making a donation today and give hope for a better tomorrow for all eczema families. We are firm believers that every little bit helps.

Gratefully,  
Lauren & Matt Bendiksen



P.S. Eczema continues to be a struggle for our family, Natalie especially. She has her good days and bad days, and is coping the best way a six year old can!

## Allergy Capitals

There is no place safe from allergies in America, and some cities are more problematic than others. The Allergy Capitals is an annual research project of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) to identify "the 100 most challenging places to live with allergies" in the spring and fall seasons each year. The rankings are based on scientific analysis of 3 factors for the 100 largest metro areas in the U.S. [READ MORE >>>](#)



5<sup>th</sup>

*International Workshop for the Study of Itch (IWSI)*

## NEA Co-Sponsors Symposium on Itch at International Workshop

The National Eczema Association is co-sponsoring a symposium during the Fifth International Workshop on Itch in Tokyo, Japan. By sponsoring and attending the Workshop, NEA will continue to advocate for eczema patients and seek treatments and an ultimate cure for the incessant itch that accompanies this disease.

The NEA Scientific Advisory Committee identified the validation and measurement methods used to rate itch severity and improvement as a research priority. NEA research initiatives on the study of itch are of tremendous value for eczema patients, and also serves to attract and expand experts in the field of scientific inquiry on this subject. We will have a full report on this unique symposium in our Winter 2010 Quarterly Newsletter. [Sign Up to receive the NEA Newsletter >>>](#)

## Eczema and Flu Season

### *Special information for people with egg allergy*

Flu refers to illnesses caused by a number of different influenza viruses. Flu can cause a range of symptoms and effects, from mild to lethal. Two strains of flu, seasonal flu and the H1N1 (Swine) flu, are currently circulating in the United States.



Seasonal flu is a contagious respiratory illness that can cause mild to severe illness and sometimes death. H1N1 is a new and different flu virus that may cause more illness or more severe disease than usual.

Take steps to prevent infection. Both types of viruses are spread by close contact with individuals who already have the flu. Protect yourself against infection:

- Get vaccinated: Two separate vaccines are available for seasonal flu and H1N1. Learn more at the Centers for Disease Control Website <http://www.cdc.gov/>
- Practice good hygiene: Avoid close contact with people who are sick, wash your hands frequently, and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. See the CDC's detailed recommendations here: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm>

For patients with documented egg allergy, any respiratory influenza and H1N1 pandemic vaccine should be given by an allergist or physician with training on allergic reactions. Influenza vaccines contain limited amounts of egg protein, and this amount may vary from year to year and batch to batch.

For many of our eczema patients, despite not having egg allergies, they will notice a "flare" of the eczema a few days after the vaccine. This may be due to non-specific immune stimulation from the vaccine; it is not a reason to avoid the vaccine, but being aware of the flare-up can be combated by proper medication and skin care. This is the case for both injectable and intra-nasal vaccines.

### **NeedyMeds.org and National Eczema Association Form Partnership**

NeedyMeds.org and the National Eczema Association have formed a partnership to provide information on medications used for eczema, and to give eczema patients in need of financial assistance the required resources and links to get help.



NeedyMeds has added an eczema resource page on their website. The resource page, created in collaboration with NEA, also provides a listing for those without insurance or unable to pay for a visit with a physician, a nationwide list of free, low cost, and sliding scale clinics. There is also a list of drug manufacturers that offer discount coupons. [Visit NeedMeds.org >>>](http://www.NeedMeds.org)

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