

Pointers For Parents

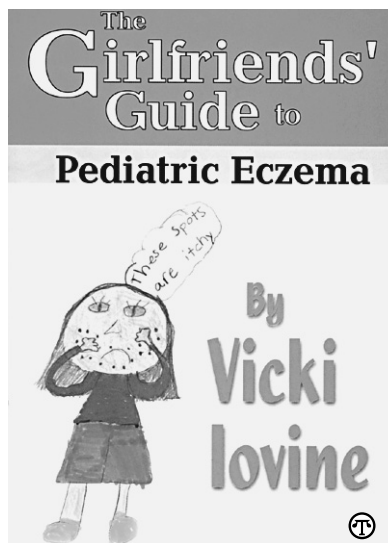
Trusted "Girlfriend" Gives Helpful Advice for Kids' Eczema

(NAPSA)—America's favorite Girlfriend, Vicki Iovine, author of the bestseller, *The Girlfriend's Guide to Pregnancy*, is embarking on a new campaign to educate parents about eczema, a skin condition that affects an estimated 10 percent of children in the U.S. "I will never get over the disappointment of my first baby girl's baptism day," attests Vicki. "She was wearing a gown that her grandmother had worn and all the family had flown in for the big day and I just knew the photos would be adorable, EXCEPT HER ENTIRE FACE WAS A BIG RED RASH!"

When Vicki took her daughter to the pediatrician, she learned that her child suffered from eczema. Eczema is the name most often used when referring to atopic dermatitis, a chronic, inflammatory skin condition, which almost always begins in childhood, usually during infancy.

In speaking with her pediatrician and girlfriends, Vicki learned a lot about this condition, and was able to prevent it from negatively affecting her child's self-confidence.

Empowered by what she learned, Vicki agreed to write a booklet about eczema for Girlfriends and other caregivers so they could benefit from her experience. In her booklet, made possible through the support of Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, Vicki uses an engaging mix of humor, first-hand experience and girlfriend's insight to discuss the psychological effects of eczema, as well as ways to take charge of the condition. Her counsel includes



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going to see a doctor to get a proper diagnosis and discuss treatment options.

To order the free booklet on eczema, call 1-866-545-6711.

Beyond girlfriend's advice, Vicki gives the hard facts about eczema, which she learned through research and consultation with a pediatric dermatologist who specializes in eczema, Dr. Adelaide Hebert.

According to Dr. Hebert, there are steroid and steroid-free topical options available in cream or ointment formulations. She says moms shouldn't be shy about getting the right diagnosis and asking their doctor which treatment option might be right for their child.

"Moms are often hesitant about taking their children to see a doctor to find out if their child's

rashes are eczema-related, but it's important to do so." Dr. Hebert says. "Although eczema can't be cured, it can be treated with both over-the-counter and prescription medications, particularly steroid-free options such as Elidel."

Elidel® (pimecrolimus) Cream 1% is the first steroid-free prescription cream for mild to moderate eczema in patients as young as two years old. It is approved for the short-term and intermittent long-term treatment of mild to moderate eczema in non-immunocompromised patients, for whom conventional therapies are inadvisable because of potential risks, inadequate response or intolerance. As conventional therapies can be inadvisable and/or ineffective for many of these eczema patients, Elidel serves as a valuable treatment option for this large population.

Elidel, which was approved by the FDA in December 2001, is available in tubes of 15g, 30g and 100g. The approval was based on safety and efficacy results of clinical trials in more than 1700 pediatric and adult patients. The most common side effect on the skin was a mild to moderate temporary feeling of warmth or burning (occurring in 8 percent of children aged 2-17 years and in 26 percent of adults). This side effect was temporary and its occurrences were comparable to those experienced by patients on placebo cream.

Developed by the Novartis Research Institute, Elidel may be used on all skin surfaces, including delicate areas such as the face, neck and skin folds.