

# Understanding Your Skin

## Alleviating Troubling Eczema Symptoms

(NAPSA)—Two-year-old Megan had a dry, red rash all over her body, particularly on her legs, ever since she was an infant. The rash, which left Megan itchy and crying in pain, kept Megan and the rest of her family up at night.

"We rarely got more than two or three hours of sleep because of her scratching and itching," said Barbara Birnbaum, Megan's mother. "It took us a long time to rule out diet problems, allergy problems, and other things until we realized it was a severe skin problem."

When Barbara took her young daughter to the pediatrician, she learned that Megan suffered from a chronic skin condition called atopic dermatitis, commonly referred to as eczema.

Eczema, which affects up to 40 million Americans, primarily affects children and may last until late teens or even for life. Ninety percent of people with eczema show signs of the disease in early childhood, leading many patients and parents of young children to seek effective treatment. While there is no cure, certain treatments can help control the physical signs and symptoms of the disease.

A new prescription medication recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration may help. Studies show the new cream, Elidel®, can relieve the itching and redness associated with eczema within one week of starting treatment and without many of the side effects associated with topical corticosteroids.

"Elidel is a new type of medicine for atopic dermatitis," said Lawrence Eichenfield, MD, chief of pediatric and adolescent derma-



**A new medication may help many children and adults relieve their eczema.**

tology at Children's Hospital, San Diego. "It's a steroid-free cream that works by decreasing inflammation and the itch that's normally associated with eczema. It's very safe, but highly effective."

Elidel is approved for the short-term and intermittent long-term treatment of mild to moderate eczema in non-immunocompromised patients as young as two years for whom conventional therapies are inadvisable because of potential risks, inadequate response, or intolerance. The most common side effects were a feeling of warmth or burning where Elidel was applied, which was mild and went away within a few days; headache; and cold-like symptoms. The cream may be used on all skin surfaces, including delicate areas such as face, neck and skin folds.

For more information, visit [www.elidel.com](http://www.elidel.com) or call 1-877-4-ELIDEL.