

# WHY DOES ECZEMA --- MATTER?

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# Why does eczema matter?

- New Zealand context
- The impact of eczema
  - Child
  - Family
  - Economically

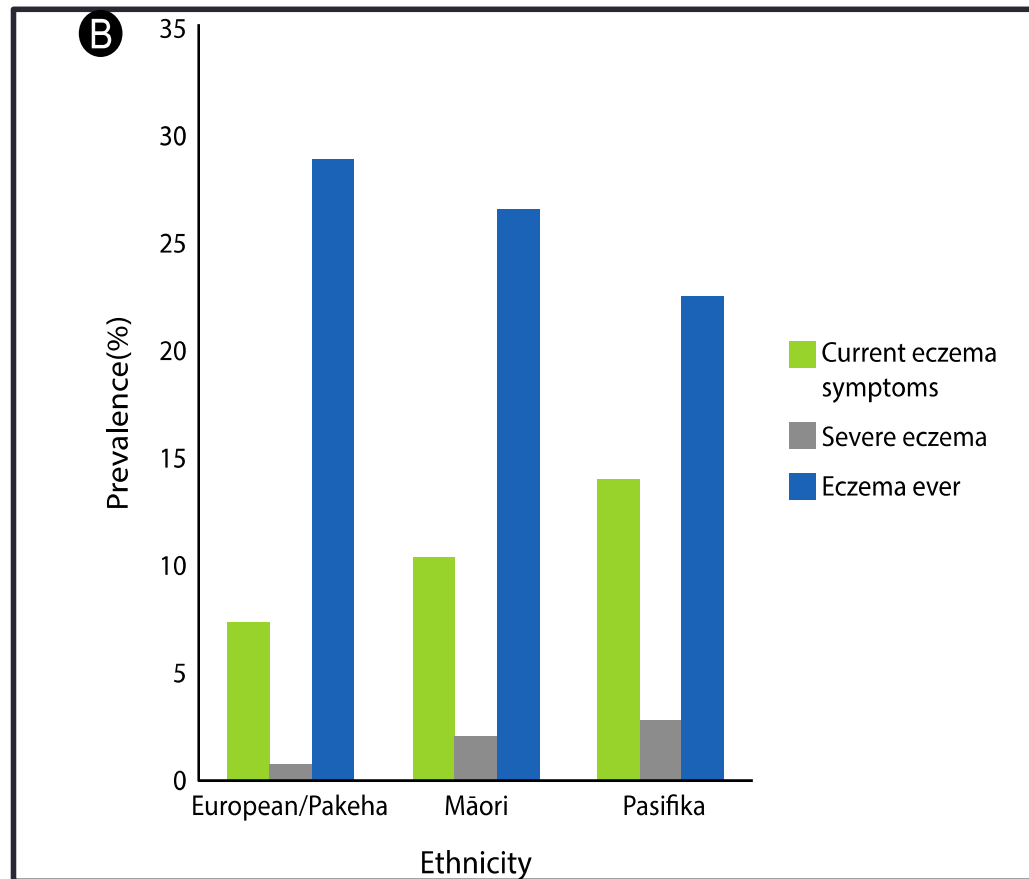


# Eczema is common

- Christchurch Child Development study
  - Prevalence 16.6% at 2 years
- Auckland Birthweight Collaborative (ABC) Study
  - Prevalence 15.7% at 3.5 years of age
- International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC)
  - Prevalence 13-15% in NZ school age children and adolescents
- Limited data on ethnicity – one hospital study found Maori/Pacifica children had more severe disease

# Time trends, ethnicity and risk factors for eczema in New Zealand children: ISAAC Phase Three

Tadd Clayton<sup>1</sup>, M Innes Asher<sup>1\*</sup>, Julian Crane<sup>2</sup>, Philippa Ellwood<sup>1</sup>, Richard Mackay<sup>1</sup>, Edwin A Mitchell<sup>1</sup>, Chris D Moyes<sup>4</sup>, Philip Pattemore<sup>5</sup>, Neil Pearce<sup>4</sup>, and Alistair W Stewart<sup>7</sup>



Eczema prevalence at 13-14 years

# The burden of eczema

- Severity of eczema in the community
  - 84% mild
  - 14% moderate
  - 2% severe
  - Around 6% of children with eczema are seen in secondary care
    - Williams et al Nottingham, UK

# Quality of life

- Eczema can affect children's quality of life in many ways
  - Itch
  - Disturbed sleep and fatigue
  - Behaviour problems, ADHD
  - Time spent and dislike of treatments
  - Restriction of diet, activities and clothing
  - School absenteeism
  - Bullying
  - Self-esteem
  - Peer relationships
- Children with eczema have twice the rate of psychological problems as their peers



# Quality of life

- Eczema can affect the quality of life of the ***parents*** of affected children in many ways
  - Guilt and frustration
  - Sadness, depression, and anxiety
  - Difficulties in disciplining their child
  - Reactions from strangers
  - Time spent on treatment
  - Difficulty getting childcare
  - Affects decision to return to work
  - Affected confidence in medical care

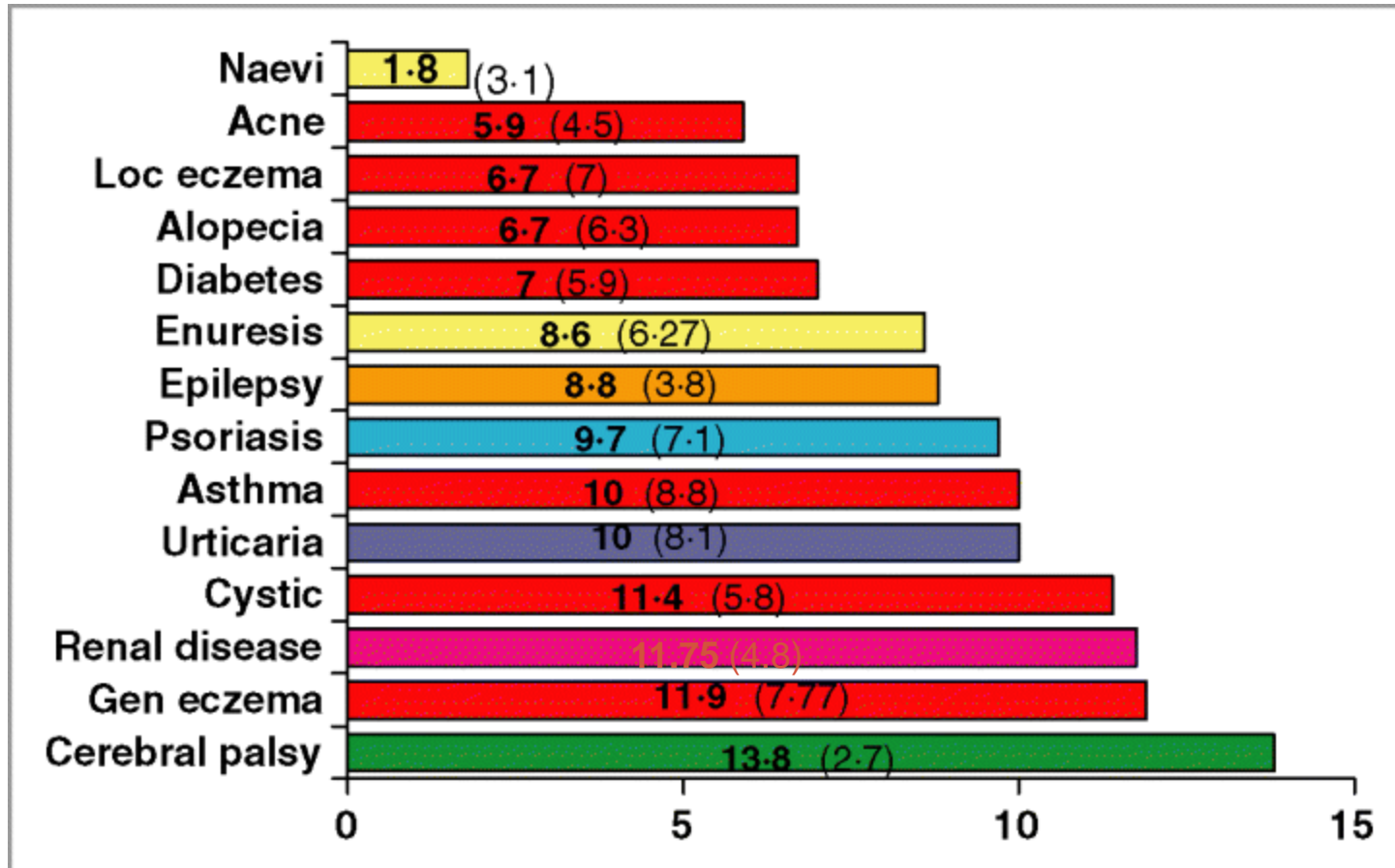
# Eczema, asthma and sleep

Prospective comparative study of sleep disturbance of parents of children attending secondary care outpatient clinics for eczema or asthma

		Eczema n=32	Asthma n=37
Number of times sleep disturbed by child	Mother	4 (2-6)	2 (0-3)
	Father	4 (0-5)	1 (0-1)
Number of times got up to child	Mother	4 (2-5)	1 (0-3)
	Father	2 (0-5)	0 (0-1)
Time (minutes) up with child	Mother	78 (19-216)	0 (0-35)
	Father	90 (10-252)	0 (1-10)



# Quality of life



- Children's Life Quality Index scores (mean $\pm$ SD) for 540 children; 379 with chronic skin disease and 161 with other chronic diseases. Beattie et al 2006



- Although eczema doesn't have the same life-shortening effects as many other chronic diseases, on a day-to-day basis its impact on families is huge

# What about the dollars?

- Costs of eczema include:
  - GP appointments
  - Specialist appointments
  - Prescription and medication charges
  - Costs of complementary therapies eg visits and remedies
  - Costs of specialised foods and clothing
  - Lost productivity – work and school
  - Hospitalisation
  - Treatment of complications

# Complications

**THE NEW ZEALAND  
MEDICAL JOURNAL**  
Journal of the New Zealand Medical Association



## **Serious skin infections in children: a review of admissions to Gisborne Hospital (2006–2007)**

Cathryn O'Sullivan, Michael G Baker

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### **Abstract**

**Aim** Serious skin infections are an important and increasing problem in New Zealand children. The highest national rates are in the Tairāwhiti (Gisborne) region on the East Coast of New Zealand's North Island, where evidence of significant ethnic disparities exists. This study aimed to describe the characteristics of serious skin infections in children hospitalised in the Tairāwhiti region.

- 42% had a predisposing skin condition
- 16% had eczema – main modifiable risk factor

# Economics

- UK – survey of GP patients with eczema (Emerson 2001)
  - Healthcare costs US\$83
  - Patient/family costs US\$41
  - Costs to other sectors US\$6
  - Total cost US\$130
- Australia – survey of hospital outpatients (Kemp 1999)
  - Mild eczema US\$901
  - Moderate disease US\$2858
  - Severe disease US\$4810

# And the good news?

**Eczema is manageable**

**Effective treatment can reduce morbidity**

**Effective treatment may improve prognosis**