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## [IEC Welcomes New President and Directors; Dr. Guttman Reflects on IEC's Progress](#)

The IEC extends its gratitude to Emma Guttman, MD, PhD, for her tireless work since she cofounded the IEC with Amy Paller, MD, MS, in 2014.

The IEC's inaugural president-elect, Guttman served as president for the past three years and transitions now to immediate past president. During her tenure with the IEC, Dr. Guttman has planned and participated in numerous IEC symposia and manuscripts; strengthened IEC partnerships; supported multiple program launches including the IEC Fellowship Program; championed diversity, equity, and inclusion; and advanced dermatological research, treatment, and care for patients with an atopic dermatitis diagnosis.

### [Listen to Dr. Guttman's 5-minute audio interview](#)

to hear her talk about the research and educational achievements of the IEC. Dr. Guttman, who was president during the first 12 months of the pandemic, describes how the IEC adapted in response to COVID-19 restrictions by pivoting to virtual education programs. The success of these virtual programs has expanded the ability of the IEC to educate clinicians globally—an unexpected benefit that is here to stay. She also shares her goals for the IEC and is particularly excited about the launch of the IEC Clinical and Research Fellowships, which will train

the next generation of dermatologists to ultimately improve the quality of care for patients with atopic dermatitis.

As a world-leading expert in inflammatory skin diseases, Guttman divides her time between a busy clinic, where she sees patients from all over the world, and her growing laboratory that focuses on research on the mechanisms underlying inflammatory skin diseases, leading to novel treatments for these patients. Dr. Guttman also was recently appointed health system chair at the Department of Dermatology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York. In addition, she is the Waldman Professor of Dermatology and Immunology, director of the Center of Excellence for Eczema and the Occupational Dermatitis Clinic, and director of the Laboratory for Inflammatory Skin Diseases at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Listen to an  
interview with  
**Dr. Emma  
Guttman**



**LISTEN  
NOW**

The IEC is pleased to introduce Robert Bissonnette, MD, FRCPC, MSc, as the new IEC president. Bissonnette, from Montreal, QC, Canada, is the CEO and medical director of Innovaderm Research, a contract research organization specializing in the design, conduct, and analysis of clinical trials in various areas of dermatology.



"It is a great honor and privilege to become president of IEC," Dr. Bissonnette said. "We are currently facing a challenging environment with restrictions on travel and cancellation of most in-person dermatology meetings in 2021. Despite this situation, we have been, and will continue to be, very active by organizing virtual events and in-person fellowships, and by publishing important articles on atopic dermatitis. My goal for the next 3 years is to increase the outreach and impact of IEC on physicians and patients by being able to offer more global opportunities to learn, help patients, and be involved in eczema care and research."

When Dr. Bissonnette became president, Dr. Guttman transitioned to the role of immediate past president. Additional IEC leaders starting new terms or roles are:

- Alan Irvine, MD, DSc, from Dublin, Ireland, is the new IEC



summarize these findings using the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development, and Evaluation (GRADE) approach, in which accumulated evidence per potential biomarker (separated by pediatric and adults, and at baseline and during topical and systemic treatments) was graded on the basis of strength of the overall published data. They found that chemokine C-C motif ligand 17/thymus and activation-regulated chemokine (CCL17/TARC), a chemoattractant of T<sub>H</sub>2 cells, currently has the greatest evidence for robust correlation with AD clinical severity, at both baseline and during therapy. Although CCL17/TARC is also implicated in other atopic diseases, including asthma and allergic rhinitis, correlation with clinical severity has been established only in patients with AD.

Three sources of biomarkers were examined—blood and skin samples collected by biopsies (entire epidermis and dermis) and tape-strips (stratum corneum and some of the stratum granulosum). Though all three sources have advantages and disadvantages, tape strips show particular promise in both adult and pediatric patients because this method is minimally invasive, so can be assessed repeatedly in the context of treatment monitoring and longitudinal studies without undue discomfort and complications.

Also included in the article are the results of the IEC's online Biomarkers in AD survey, which was emailed to all IEC councilors and associates prior to the IEC symposium at the 2019 Society for Investigative Dermatology annual meeting. Overall, these experts believe that AD is a heterogeneous disease with at least three different phenotypes, that biomarkers may help to stratify patients by phenotypes and improve patient management and treatment compliance, and that future developments should focus on their use as predictors of therapeutic response. Of the respondents, 70% report using biomarkers in the diagnosis of AD to complement physical examination and more accurately assess severity; they predominantly use nonspecific markers of inflammation and atopy (IgE: 100%; eosinophils: 92%). However, one of the biomarkers reported being used is CCL17/TARC, the chemokine with the greatest evidence-based support to become a potential AD biomarker.

The potential of biomarkers in AD is compelling but yet to be fully elucidated. The authors recommend that large-scale trials be conducted, including trials with patients with variable AD phenotypes, in which biomarker dynamics are closely monitored in relation to therapeutic response to improve the validity and relevance of biomarkers in AD. This may lead to a future clinical approach using biomarkers as a practical tool to help personally tailor AD treatment to individual patients.

[READ THE MANUSCRIPT](#)

# Concerns for Patients with Atopic Dermatitis

The [IEC Statement on New COVID-19 Vaccines](#), available on the [IEC Coronavirus Resources](#) page, is provided for the eczema community in response to concerns about potential risks associated with the COVID-19 vaccines.

Please read the [full statement](#). Patients are advised to consult with their treating physician regarding their specific clinical circumstances before undertaking any changes in their medication regimen or taking the COVID-19 vaccine.

[READ THE STATEMENT](#)

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## You Are Invited to Attend Upcoming IEC Virtual and Live Symposia

The IEC will present a mix of [virtual and live in-person symposia](#) this year.

In May, the [Biomarkers](#) IEC virtual symposium will take place during the 2021 Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID) Virtual Meeting. The potential of several possible biomarkers in AD will be explored, from biomarker-based endophenotypes to treatment-response biomarkers.

In September, the IEC symposium [Human Models of Atopic Dermatitis](#) is planned for the 50th Annual European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR) Meeting, a virtual conference. Also in September, the IEC symposium [Management of Pediatric Atopic Dermatitis: A Global Perspective](#) is currently planned as a live, in-person event during the 14th World Congress of Paediatric Dermatology (WCPD2021) in Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom. Prior to the Virtual European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) 30th Anniversary Congress at the end of September, the IEC will present [Atopic Dermatitis Involving the Face and Sensitive Areas](#)

The final IEC event that rounds out 2021 is a live, in-person joint symposium in November with the National Alopecia Areata Foundation (NAAF) and the National Eczema Association (NEA); [Alopecia Areata and Atopic Dermatitis](#) will take place immediately before the 4th Inflammatory Skin Disease Summit (ISDS) 2021 in New York, NY, USA.

The IEC will continue to update [upcoming symposia](#) details as plans evolve.

[VIEW UPCOMING SYMPOSIA](#)

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## View Four On-Demand Virtual Educational Events Presented by the IEC

The IEC invites you to view a series of [complimentary virtual education events](#) presented by internationally renowned experts in atopic dermatitis, who will also engage in panel discussions.

Presented in March 2021, the [Hand Eczema](#) virtual symposium covers all aspects of chronic hand eczema (CHE) including epidemiology, etiologies and clinical subtypes; clinical tools to measure CHE severity; and current and future topical and systemic therapeutic options. Viewers will learn how to run an effective CHE clinic, with efficient evidence-based medical work-up, acute treatment, long-term treatment planning, patient education, and preventive strategies.

The IEC symposium [Novel Systemic Treatments for Atopic Dermatitis and Clinical Trial Design](#) was presented at the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) 2020 Virtual Congress in October 2020. The presenters discuss how to optimize clinical trial design for AD drug development, with specific sessions on monoclonal antibodies targeting Th2 receptors, cytokines, epithelial-derived protein, and other targets; biomarkers of disease response; systemic and topical JAK inhibitors; and other systemic treatments.

Presented in September 2020, [New Treatments for Atopic Dermatitis in Infants and Children](#) covers the characteristics of AD in children from birth to 18 years, mechanisms for the prevention of AD in infants with a genetic predisposition, and both topical and systemic therapies for infants and children.

The [Management of AD Patients on Systemic Treatments During COVID-19](#) virtual program was presented in July 2020. Viewers will learn about managing both pediatric and adult AD patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also presented is a study designed to characterize the response to COVID-19 in patients with moderate to severe AD and information about SECURE-AD (Surveillance Epidemiology of Coronavirus [COVID-19] Under Research Exclusion-Atopic Dermatitis), a secure, online, de-identified international reporting registry for healthcare providers to report outcomes in AD patients who have been infected with COVID-19.

Access these events from our [Virtual Learning Series page](#).

WATCH VIRTUAL LEARNING SERIES

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## About the IEC

The [International Eczema Council](#) (IEC) is a global nonprofit organization led by dermatology experts on atopic dermatitis (AD). The IEC is dedicated to increasing the understanding of AD and promoting its optimal management through research, education and patient/family care. More than 100 Councilors and Associates from 24 countries contribute their expertise to support the IEC's research, programs, events, and education.