



European Dermatology Forum

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Skin cancer, psoriasis and allergy: widespread diseases today

25% of the population suffers from skin diseases or allergies

The challenge in dermatology today: due to the increasing age of the population and damaging environmental factors, the frequency of skin diseases is rapidly increasing, many of which are chronic diseases with a high impact on quality of life. Today's therapy for skin disease is often highly innovative but also required on a regular basis and therefore costly. The impact of such diseases and therapies on public health and its costs are thus the subject of discussion.

Pan-European leaders of opinion in dermatology, united within the European Dermatology Forum (EDF), are launching the 3rd Edition of the "White Book" at the Annual Meeting of the EDF on the 23rd of January 2010.

Entitled "The Challenge of Skin Diseases in Europe" this White Book provides a precious and highly appreciated source of information relevant to the burden of skin disease for decision makers in public health.

Skin and sexually transmitted diseases pose a huge health problem to Europe. They range from the very common to the rare, from the severe to the relatively trivial, and from acute illness to chronic life-long disease. They include cancers, infectious diseases and long term inflammatory diseases resulting in profound health economic issues. Correct diagnosis and early management can mitigate against these costs, reduce morbidity and greatly improve the life quality of patients. It is the responsibility of dermatologists to provide leadership in the management, prevention, teaching and research of skin diseases and their treatment.

How frequent is skin disease in Europe ?

Some examples: the current lifetime risk of developing malignant melanoma - the most severe type of skin cancer - is approximately 1 in 300. With the current ageing of the population, a strong increase in the frequency of skin cancer and chronic leg ulcers is being observed: at present every 3rd person over the age of 60 years will suffer from a skin cancer, likewise, 5% of

patients over 80 years of age suffer from a chronic leg ulcer. Furthermore, as many as 20% of pre-school children in Western Europe have atopic dermatitis, and 2% of the population suffer from psoriasis. More recently, we are observing a renaissance of sexually-transmitted diseases such as syphilis in Europe, posing an additional public health problem.

Launch of the 3rd Edition of the EDF "White Book " - The Challenge of Skin Disease in Europe

A key initiative of the European Dermatology Forum (EDF) is the publication of a White Book delineating the critical issues facing patients with skin diseases in Europe.

Building upon the success of the past two editions the EDF has published an expanded and definitive text on dermatology needs and solutions that will aid in development and implementation of dermatology care programs across Europe. This book describes the burden of skin and sexually transmitted diseases to Europe and shows how service provision varies across the continent. It outlines the high impact diseases and their management and provides up-to-date information on key areas of clinical and scientific advance. A directory of national dermatological associations, European dermatology societies and patient organisations complete a valuable resource that will inform all those involved in delivery of healthcare to patients. These extend from dermatologists, to healthcare providers to the pharmaceutical industry and to politicians.

The White Book is titled: THE CHALLENGE OF SKIN DISEASES IN EUROPE. The launch is taking place at the EDF annual scientific meeting to be held in Luzern, Switzerland on Saturday, January 23rd 2010.

The European Dermatology Forum (EDF)

The European Dermatology Forum (EDF) is a pan-European society of heads of academic departments and key opinion leaders in dermatology. It is dedicated to promoting the highest possible standards in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases and thereby improve and extend the lives of patients in Europe with significant skin and sexually transmitted diseases. The EDF aims to achieve this through a number of initiatives which include production of pan-European guidelines setting standards of care and representing the needs of dermatological patients to healthcare providers.

Professor Annamari Ranki, Chair of Dermatology at University of Helsinki and President of EDF states: *'In an era of ageing skin and ever increasing incidence of skin cancer, the EDF provides leadership to highlight the critical issues in providing cost-effective care for patients with devastating skin diseases. This is encapsulated in the EDF White Book which will provide a key point of reference for all health care decision makers.'*

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