

Powerful new *Stories About Skin* podcast offers candid personal insights and trusted expert opinions on breakthrough research and treatments options for eczema.

Stories About Skin is a groundbreaking new podcast series that explores the human side of skin conditions, combining compelling personal stories with up-to-date expert insights and information.

Produced by the respected medical team behind the **Spot Diagnosis Podcast**, **Stories About Skin** gives both patients and health professionals a powerful perspective on specific skin conditions.

The first episode focuses on **eczema**, a common and chronic skin disease affecting up to 30% of children and 10% of adults to varying degrees.

Patients courageously share personal experiences of their illness - from initial symptoms, to diagnosis, treatment and side effects, as well as the impact to their quality of life and mental health.

They are heartfelt, honest and sometimes raw stories of what it's like to live with a debilitating skin condition, but they also offer hope and humour in equal parts.

Stories About Skin shares valuable insights and up-to-date information from leading clinicians including dermatologists, psychologists and allied health practitioners discussing the facts, dispelling the myths and discussing a range of new life-changing eczema treatments now available on the PBS.

In **Stories about Skin: Navigating Eczema**, Jenny, mother of seven-year-old Atticus who has suffered from eczema since he was one month old, shares her perspective as a carer and the impact the disease has had on their family.

‘It's a big emotional toll as well; besides just the marks on your skin and how itchy and irritating and uncomfortable it is, because I know that Atticus would struggle to fall asleep because of how itchy and irritated he was. It's an all-rounder because you're irritated, you probably eat less, you sleep less, your emotions aren't all there, you're not confident. For a condition that happens to so many people, it can affect you quite severely,’ she says.

Long term severe eczema sufferer Annie, 25, also candidly shares her experience - growing through the tough teen years and into adulthood, navigating social media and well-meaning, but sometimes misguided, family advice on how best to manage serious flare ups.

“Eczema is not just about the pain that I felt physically, but it was also about the quality of life, and I guess, how eczema can really take away from my quality of life...”

Host Kim Wilson skilfully guides the conversation, drawing on her interviewing expertise to ask probing questions and facilitate a dynamic dialogue between the patients and clinicians. A/Prof Alvin Chong and Dr Susan Robertson, both respected authorities in dermatology, provide valuable medical perspectives, treatment insights, and the latest advancements in eczema research, and clinical psychologist A/Prof Ross King, discusses the mental health toll of eczema on the patient.

Listeners can expect to:

Hear personal stories: Hearing these very personal stories gives meaningful and authentic insight into the challenges of living with eczema and the medical journey patients must navigate.

Discover coping strategies: The episode explores coping mechanisms and lifestyle adjustments that can significantly improve the quality of life for individuals dealing with eczema.

Gain clinical insights: A/Prof Alvin Chong and Dr Susan Robertson provide a professional perspective on eczema, discussing treatment options, managing symptoms, the importance of a collaborative patient-clinician relationship and the breakthroughs in treatment options.

“One of the newest medications that have become available is a medication called dupilumab...It has been extremely effective and life-changing for a number of our patients with severe eczema. It's currently available for children from age 12 and above, although it is TGA-approved from age six” Dr Robertson says.

Stay Informed About Research: A/Prof Alvin Chong and Dr Susan Robertson give listeners a glimpse into the latest research and breakthroughs in eczema management.

The Spot Diagnosis Podcast's commitment to providing accurate, compassionate, and empowering information is at the forefront of this episode. By bridging the gap between patients and clinicians, the podcast aims to foster a better understanding of eczema and inspire hope for those grappling with this challenging condition.

"Stories about Skin: Navigating Eczema" will be available for streaming on Apple and Spotify on Tuesday 21 November from 9am.

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About Spot Diagnosis Podcast:

The Spot Diagnosis Podcast is developed by the Skin Health Institute and examines the skin complaints commonly encountered by general practitioners. The series provides evidence-based, up-to-date medical education & information aimed at upskilling medical practitioners in treating skin complaints, to improve the skin health of our communities.

About Skin Health Institute:

The Skin Health Institute is a not-for-profit centre of excellence in skin health that delivers highly specialised clinical treatment, education and research for skin diseases, skin cancers and melanoma.

About Kim Wilson, host of Stories about Skin: Navigating Eczema:

Kim Wilson is a freelance journalist and content creator with more than 25 years' experience in news, features and lifestyle reporting. She worked at The Herald Sun for 17 years, while also providing expert commentary on network news and radio.

About A/Prof Alvin Chong, dermatologist and co-creator and host of the Spot Diagnosis Podcast:

A/Prof Alvin Chong's is a highly respected dermatologist with public clinical appointments as Specialist Dermatologist and Director of Dermatology Education at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne. He is also the Head of the Transplant Dermatology Clinic at the Skin Health Institute. He has an academic appointment as an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Melbourne, where he has a profile as an international authority on skin cancers in immunosuppressed patients.