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Board of Directors
American Academy of Dermatology
P.O. Box 1968
Des Plaines, IL 60017
president@aad.org

Dear Board Members,

I am writing out of deep concern for the more than 31 million people living with Atopic Dermatitis in the United States, as well as millions more living with a wide variety of skin conditions regularly treated with topical corticosteroids (TCSs). Because TCSs are widely prescribed or purchased over the counter and because dermatologists *regularly* prescribe TCSs beyond the recommended use periods, patients are often entirely unaware of the risks of prolonged TCS use, such as the excruciatingly painful, burning rash and itchy, peeling skin associated with topical steroid withdrawal (TSW). Further, physicians in general almost universally fail to identify TSW because the condition is not recognized as a side-effect of TCS use by medical authorities such as the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD).

While public outcry over the lack of updated guidance around TCS usage recently prompted the British Association of Dermatologists and the National Eczema Society in the UK to publish new guidelines in early 2021, the AAD has not followed suit, nor have they formally acknowledged the risk of TSW with prolonged TCS use.

TSW has been ignored by the medical community for too long. As a **[person suffering with TSW/caregiver of someone suffering with TSW]**, I have experienced first-hand how debilitating this condition can be for sufferers and their families, a pain redoubled by the medical community's failure to formally acknowledge the condition and change risky prescribing practices. **[Please share your story here. When did your experience with TSW begin? What have doctors said about your/your loved one's symptoms? How did this/ does this condition impact your daily life?]**.

I implore you to act now to publish revised prescribing guidelines for TCSs that 1) urge doctors to stick to short-term use windows at the lowest possible potency; 2) exhort doctors to monitor patients for symptoms of vascular dependency both during and after TCS use; and 3) formally recognize TSW as a serious side effect of TCSs.

The AAD has the unique power to change the culture of steroid abuse. Above all, it has a *duty* to people across the country living with this devastating condition to do so. I urge you to honor that duty.

Sincerely,

[Your name here]

