



## **Award-Winning Chef Elizabeth Falkner Reveals Her Struggle with Atopic Dermatitis to Highlight the Physical and Psychological Impact of the Disease**

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TARRYTOWN, N.Y. and CAMBRIDGE, Mass., July 12, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Celebrity chef, restaurateur, and media personality Elizabeth Falkner has teamed up with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ: **REGN**), Sanofi Genzyme, the National Eczema Association, and the Dermatology Nurses Association to launch *Understand AD*, a national awareness campaign focused on educating people about moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (AD), a potentially serious chronic inflammatory skin disease. Falkner is speaking out for the first time about her own struggle with the disease to drive awareness about the physical impact and effects on quality of life for people living with atopic dermatitis, and to encourage others to speak up about their experience.

"I have been living with the challenges of atopic dermatitis for more than 20 years. At its worst, my atopic dermatitis causes constant, unbearable itching, scabbing, visible rashes on my body and even bleeding, and that's only the physical part," says Elizabeth Falkner. "Having atopic dermatitis can affect many aspects of a person's life - physically and emotionally - and yet many people don't understand the severity and impact. I joined *Understand AD* to empower people to have more open conversations with their doctors and loved ones about the impact this disease has on their lives."

Atopic dermatitis is a chronic, systemic inflammatory disease characterized by rashes and can include intense itching, skin dryness, cracking, redness, crusting, and oozing. Though symptoms can appear on the surface of the skin all over the body, advances in research have provided new insights on the cause of atopic dermatitis. Scientists now believe AD is caused in part by systemic allergic inflammation that results from a malfunctioning immune system. The physical symptoms are challenging and may impact people's sleep and daily lives and the disease can also make people feel self-conscious and embarrassed about their appearance.

"*Understand AD* aligns with our mission to educate the public and support patients impacted by atopic dermatitis," says Julie Block, President and CEO, National Eczema Association. "Unfortunately, there's a misperception that atopic dermatitis is just a 'skin condition' that people can deal with on their own, but in reality, it's an immunological disease that has a huge impact on patients' lives. We want people living with this disease to know that they're not alone and that we're committed to advocating for better care and treatments, providing support and raising the level of awareness about this serious, and often overlooked, disease."

An estimated 1.6 million adults in the United States live with uncontrolled moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis. Researchers continue to discover more about atopic dermatitis and there is still a need for additional treatment options for atopic dermatitis.

"Our community of nurses on the front lines see people every day who are suffering with atopic dermatitis," says Donna Beyer, MSN, RN, DNC, President of the Dermatology Nurses' Association. "But there is still a gap in public awareness about this disease and a clear need for continued education and supportive resources for patients. We're excited to join *Understand AD* to help educate about the disease and to drive the dialogue that atopic dermatitis is more than skin deep."

Visit [www.UnderstandAD.com](http://www.UnderstandAD.com) to learn more about moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis, get connected with advocates such as the [National Eczema Association](#) and [Dermatology Nurses Association](#), and hear from award-winning chef, media personality and restaurateur Elizabeth Falkner who has lived with atopic dermatitis for the past 20 years.

### **About Sanofi**

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi is organized into five global business units: Diabetes and Cardiovascular, General Medicines and Emerging Markets, Sanofi Genzyme, Sanofi Pasteur and Merial.

Sanofi Genzyme focuses on developing specialty treatments for debilitating diseases that are often difficult to diagnose and treat, providing hope to patients and their families.

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### **About Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.**

Regeneron (NASDAQ: [REGN](#)) is a leading science-based biopharmaceutical company based in Tarrytown, New York that discovers, invents, develops, manufactures, and commercializes medicines for the treatment of serious medical conditions. Regeneron commercializes medicines for eye diseases, high LDL cholesterol and a rare inflammatory condition and has product candidates in development in other areas of high unmet medical need, including rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, atopic dermatitis, pain, cancer, and infectious diseases. For additional information about the company, please visit [www.regeneron.com](http://www.regeneron.com) or follow @Regeneron on Twitter.

### **About the National Eczema Association**

The National Eczema Association (NEA) is a non-profit 501(c) (3) patient advocacy organization whose mission is to improve the health and quality of life for individuals with eczema through research, support, and education. In the United States alone, over 10% of the population has some form of atopic dermatitis/eczema. NEA was founded in 1988 by a group of patients, medical professionals, and parents to help individuals and families living with this skin disease live healthier lives. Through a variety of educational materials, including a quarterly patient-oriented magazine, a monthly electronic newsletter, and trustworthy website, the NEA reaches out to a diverse audience that includes eczema patients, caregivers, medical

professionals, and other stakeholders. NEA also conducts patient conferences and participates in a wide-variety of medical symposiums. NEA is active year round to promote eczema awareness, break through stereotypes and address issues critical to patient care. Advocacy efforts include advancing increases in skin disease research funding through the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) of the National Institutes of Health, as well as increasing public understanding regarding the burden of eczema. NEA provides a network of support groups, an up-to-date website with the latest research and treatment information, a Seal of Acceptance program for over-the-counter products to help eczema patients navigate the myriad of products necessary for their daily skin care regimen, and a research program to advance scientific knowledge and care. All NEA programs and services result in benefits for eczema patients and their families. NEA does not endorse specific products. For more information about the National Eczema Association, visit [www.nationaleczema.org](http://www.nationaleczema.org), contact at [info@nationaleczema.org](mailto:info@nationaleczema.org), or call 1-800-818-7546.

#### **About the Dermatology Nurses' Association**

The Dermatology Nurses' Association (DNA) is a professional nursing organization comprised of a diverse group of individuals committed to quality care through sharing knowledge and expertise. The core purpose of the DNA is to promote excellence in dermatologic care. Members include nurse practitioners, registered nurses, licensed practical and vocational nurses, medical assistants and others associated with dermatology nursing, who work in a variety of settings including clinics, academic institutions, private practice, public health centers, and government facilities. DNA offers education and training in fundamental and cutting-edge dermatology care and treatment through its annual convention, local chapter meetings, dermatology nurse and nurse practitioner certification review courses and expert workshops. Members of the DNA's Nurse Practitioner Society are afforded tools, resources and education focused on the needs of the advanced nurse practitioner. The DNA Focus Newsletter and official journal, the Journal of Dermatology Nurses' Association, extend the DNA's informational and education presence with association and practice news, learner-paced continuing education and timely resources.

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