



Paternoster, L., Standl, M., Waage, J., Baurecht, H., Hotze, M., Strachan, D. P., Curtin, J. A., Bønnelykke, K., Tian, C., Takahashi, A., Esparza-Gordillo, J., Alves, A. C., Thyssen, J. P., den Dekker, H. T., Ferreira, M. A., Altmaier, E., Sleiman, P. M. A., Xiao, F. L., Gonzalez, J. R., ... Australian Asthma Genetics Consortium (AAGC) (2015). Multi-ancestry genome-wide association study of 21,000 cases and 95,000 controls identifies new risk loci for atopic dermatitis. *Nature Genetics*, 47(12), 1449-1456. <https://doi.org/10.1038/ng.3424>

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1 **Multi-ethnic genome-wide association study of 21,000 cases and 95,000 controls identifies new**  
2 **risk loci for atopic dermatitis**

3 Lavinia Paternoster <sup>1,2,112</sup>, Marie Standl <sup>3,112</sup>, Johannes Waage <sup>4</sup>, Hansjörg Baurecht <sup>5</sup>, Melanie  
4 Hotze <sup>5</sup>, David P Strachan <sup>6</sup>, John A Curtin <sup>7</sup>, Klaus Bønnelykke <sup>4</sup>, Chao Tian <sup>8</sup>, Atsushi Takahashi <sup>9</sup>,  
5 Jorge Esparza-Gordillo <sup>10,11</sup>, Alexsander Couto Alves <sup>12</sup>, Jacob P Thyssen <sup>13</sup>, Herman T den Dekker <sup>14</sup>,  
6 <sup>15,16</sup>, Manuel A Ferreira <sup>17</sup>, Elisabeth Altmaier <sup>18,19,20</sup>, Patrick MA Sleiman <sup>21,22</sup>, Feng Li Xiao <sup>23</sup>, Juan R  
7 Gonzalez <sup>24</sup>, Ingo Marenholz <sup>10,11</sup>, Birgit Kalb <sup>10,25</sup>, Maria Pino-Yanes <sup>26,27,28</sup>, Cheng-Jian Xu <sup>29,30</sup>,  
8 Lisbeth Carstensen <sup>31</sup>, Maria M Groen-Blokhuis <sup>32</sup>, Cristina Venturini <sup>33</sup>, Craig E Pennell <sup>34</sup>, Sheila J  
9 Barton <sup>35</sup>, Albert M Levin <sup>36</sup>, Ivan Curjuristic <sup>37,38</sup>, Mariona Bustamante <sup>24,39,40,41</sup>, Eskil Kreiner-Møller <sup>4</sup>,  
10 Gabrielle A Lockett <sup>42</sup>, Jonas Bacelis <sup>43</sup>, Supinda Bunyavanich <sup>44</sup>, Rachel A Myers <sup>45</sup>, Anja Matanovic <sup>10</sup>,  
11 <sup>11</sup>, Ashish Kumar <sup>37,38,46,47</sup>, Joyce Y Tung <sup>8</sup>, Tomomitsu Hirota <sup>48</sup>, Michiaki Kubo <sup>49</sup>, Wendy L McArdle <sup>2</sup>,  
12 A J Henderson <sup>2</sup>, John P Kemp <sup>1,2,50</sup>, Jie Zheng <sup>1,2</sup>, George Davey Smith <sup>1,2</sup>, Franz Rüschenhoff <sup>10</sup>, Anja  
13 Bauerfeind <sup>10</sup>, Min Ae Lee-Kirsch <sup>51</sup>, Andreas Arnold <sup>52</sup>, Georg Homuth <sup>53</sup>, Carsten O Schmidt <sup>54</sup>,  
14 Elisabeth Mangold <sup>55</sup>, Sven Cichon <sup>55,56,57,58,59</sup>, Thomas Keil <sup>60,61</sup>, Elke Rodríguez <sup>5</sup>, Annette Peters <sup>19</sup>,  
15 <sup>62</sup>, Andre Franke <sup>63</sup>, Wolfgang Lieb <sup>64</sup>, Natalija Novak <sup>65</sup>, Regina Fölster-Holst <sup>5</sup>, Momoko Horikoshi <sup>47</sup>,  
16 Juha Pekkanen <sup>66,67</sup>, Sylvain Sebert <sup>68,69</sup>, Lise L Husemoen <sup>70</sup>, Niels Grarup <sup>71</sup>, Johan C de Jongste <sup>14</sup>,  
17 Fernando Rivadeneira <sup>15,16,72</sup>, Albert Hofman <sup>15</sup>, Vincent WV Jaddoe <sup>14,15,16</sup>, Suzanne GMA  
18 Pasmans <sup>73</sup>, Niels J Elbert <sup>16,73</sup>, André G Uitterlinden <sup>15,72</sup>, Guy B Marks <sup>74</sup>, Philip J Thompson <sup>75,76</sup>,  
19 Melanie C Matheson <sup>77</sup>, Colin F Robertson <sup>78</sup>, Australian Asthma Genetics Consortium (AAGC) <sup>79</sup>,  
20 Janina S Ried <sup>20</sup>, Jin Li <sup>21</sup>, Xian Bo Zuo <sup>23</sup>, Xiao Dong Zheng <sup>23</sup>, Xian Yong Yin <sup>23</sup>, Liang Dan Sun <sup>23</sup>, Maeve  
21 A McAleer <sup>80,81</sup>, Grainne M O'Regan <sup>81</sup>, Caoimhe MR Fahy <sup>82</sup>, Linda E Campbell <sup>83</sup>, Milan Macek <sup>84</sup>,  
22 Michael Kurek <sup>85</sup>, Donglei Hu <sup>26</sup>, Celeste Eng <sup>26</sup>, Dirkje S Postma <sup>29</sup>, Bjarke Feenstra <sup>31</sup>, Frank Geller <sup>31</sup>,  
23 Jouke Jan Hottenga <sup>32</sup>, Christel M Middeldorp <sup>32</sup>, Pirro Hysi <sup>33</sup>, Veronique Bataille <sup>33</sup>, Tim Spector <sup>33</sup>,  
24 Carla MT Tiesler <sup>3,86</sup>, Elisabeth Thiering <sup>3,86</sup>, Badri Pahukasahasram <sup>87</sup>, James J Yang <sup>88</sup>, Medea  
25 Imboden <sup>37,38</sup>, Scott Huntsman <sup>26</sup>, Natàlia Vilor-Tejedor <sup>24,40,41</sup>, Caroline L Relton <sup>1,89</sup>, Ronny Myhre <sup>90</sup>,  
26 Wenche Nystad <sup>90</sup>, Adnan Custovic <sup>7</sup>, Scott T Weiss <sup>91</sup>, Deborah A Meyers <sup>92</sup>, Cilla Söderhäll <sup>93,94</sup>, Erik  
27 Melén <sup>46,95</sup>, Carole Ober <sup>45</sup>, Benjamin A Raby <sup>91</sup>, Angela Simpson <sup>7</sup>, Bo Jacobsson <sup>43,90</sup>, John W  
28 Holloway <sup>42,96</sup>, Hans Bisgaard <sup>4</sup>, Jordi Sunyer <sup>24,40,41,97</sup>, Nicole M Probst-Hensch <sup>37,38</sup>, L Keoki  
29 Williams <sup>87,98</sup>, Keith M Godfrey <sup>35,99</sup>, Carol A Wang <sup>34</sup>, Dorret I Boomsma <sup>32,100</sup>, Mads Melbye <sup>31,101,102</sup>,  
30 Gerard H Koppelman <sup>103</sup>, Deborah Jarvis <sup>104,105</sup>, WH Irwin McLean <sup>83</sup>, Alan D Irvine <sup>80,81,82</sup>, Xue Jun  
31 Zhang <sup>23</sup>, Hakon Hakonarson <sup>21,22</sup>, Christian Gieger <sup>18,19,20</sup>, Esteban G Burchard <sup>26,106</sup>, Nicholas G  
32 Martin <sup>17</sup>, Liesbeth Duijts <sup>14,15,16</sup>, Allan Linneberg <sup>70,101,107</sup>, Marjo-Riitta Jarvelin <sup>69,108,109,110</sup>, Markus M  
33 Noethen <sup>55,56</sup>, Susanne Lau <sup>25</sup>, Norbert Hübner <sup>10</sup>, Young-Ae Lee <sup>10,11</sup>, Mayumi Tamari <sup>48</sup>, David A  
34 Hinds <sup>8</sup>, Daniel Glass <sup>33</sup>, Sara J Brown <sup>83,111</sup>, Joachim Heinrich <sup>3</sup>, David M Evans <sup>1,2,50,113</sup>, Stephan  
35 Weidinger <sup>5,113</sup> for the EARly Genetics & Lifecourse Epidemiology (EAGLE) eczema consortium<sup>114</sup>.

36

37 1 Medical Research Council (MRC) Integrative Epidemiology Unit, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.

38 2 School of Social and Community Medicine, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.

39 3 Institute of Epidemiology I, Helmholtz Zentrum München - German Research Center for  
40 Environmental Health, Neuherberg, Germany.

41 4 Copenhagen Prospective Studies on Asthma in Childhood (COPSAC), Herlev and Gentofte Hospital,  
42 University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.

43 5 Department of Dermatology, Allergology and Venereology, University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein,  
44 Campus Kiel, Kiel, Germany.

- 45 6 Population Health Research Institute, St George's, University of London, London, UK.
- 46 7 Centre for Respiratory Medicine and Allergy, Institute of Inflammation and Repair, Manchester  
47 Academic Health Science Centre, The University of Manchester and University Hospital of South  
48 Manchester National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust, Manchester, United Kingdom.
- 49 8 23andMe, Inc., Mountain View, CA, USA.
- 50 9 Laboratory for Statistical Analysis, Center for Integrative Medical Sciences, Institute of Physical and  
51 Chemical Research (RIKEN), Yokohama, Japan.
- 52 10 Max-Delbrück-Center (MDC) for Molecular Medicine, Berlin, Germany.
- 53 11 Clinic for Pediatric Allergy, Experimental and Clinical Research Center, Charité -  
54 Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
- 55 12 Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, Imperial College London,  
56 London, UK.
- 57 13 National Allergy Research Centre, Department of Dermatology and Allergology, Herlev and  
58 Gentofte Hospital, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 59 14 Department of Pediatrics, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 60 15 Department of Epidemiology, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 61 16 The Generation R Study Group, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 62 17 QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Brisbane, Australia.
- 63 18 Research Unit of Molecular Epidemiology, Helmholtz Zentrum München, German Research  
64 Center for Environmental Health, Neuherberg, Germany.
- 65 19 Institute of Epidemiology II, Helmholtz Zentrum München - German Research Center for  
66 Environmental Health, Neuherberg, Germany.
- 67 20 Institute of Genetic Epidemiology, Helmholtz Zentrum München, German Research Center for  
68 Environmental Health, Neuherberg, Germany.
- 69 21 The Center for Applied Genomics, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- 70 22 Department of Pediatrics, The Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania,  
71 Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- 72 23 Institute of Dermatology, Anhui Medical University, Hefei, Anhui, China.
- 73 24 Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology (CREAL), Barcelona, Spain.
- 74 25 Pediatric Pneumology and Immunology, Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
- 75 26 Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, CA, USA.

- 76 27 Centro de Investigación Biomédica en Red (CIBER) de Enfermedades Respiratorias, Instituto de  
77 Salud Carlos III, Madrid, Spain.
- 78 28 Research Unit, Hospital Universitario Nuestra Señora de Candelaria, Santa Cruz de Tenerife,  
79 Spain.
- 80 29 University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Department of Pulmonology,  
81 Groningen Research Institute for Asthma and COPD (GRIAC), Groningen, the Netherlands.
- 82 30 University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Department of Genetics,  
83 Groningen Research Institute for Asthma and COPD (GRIAC), Groningen, the Netherlands.
- 84 31 Department of Epidemiology Research, Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 85 32 Dept Biological Psychology, Netherlands Twin Register, VU University, Amsterdam, the  
86 Netherlands.
- 87 33 KCL Department of Twin Research and Genetic Epidemiology, King's College London, London, UK.
- 88 34 School of Women's and Infants' Health, The University of Western Australia (UWA), Perth,  
89 Australia.
- 90 35 Medical Research Council (MRC) Lifecourse Epidemiology Unit, University of Southampton,  
91 Southampton, UK.
- 92 36 Department of Public Health Sciences, Henry Ford Health System, Detroit, MI, USA.
- 93 37 Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, Basel,  
94 Switzerland.
- 95 38 University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland.
- 96 39 Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG), Barcelona, Spain.
- 97 40 Pompeu Fabra University (UPF), Barcelona, Spain.
- 98 41 Centro de Investigación Biomédica en Red de Epidemiología y Salud Pública (CIBERESP),  
99 Barcelona, Spain.
- 100 42 Human Development and Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton, Southampton,  
101 UK.
- 102 43 Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Institute of Clinical Sciences, Sahlgrenska Academy,  
103 Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Gothenburg, Sweden.
- 104 44 Department of Genetics and Genomic Sciences, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New  
105 York, NY, USA.
- 106 45 Department of Human Genetics, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA.
- 107 46 Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

- 108 47 Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.
- 109 48 Laboratory for Respiratory and Allergic Diseases, Center for Integrative Medical Sciences, Institute  
110 of Physical and Chemical Research (RIKEN), Yokohama, Japan.
- 111 49 Laboratory for Genotyping Development, Center for Integrative Medical Sciences, Institute of  
112 Physical and Chemical Research (RIKEN), Yokohama, Japan.
- 113 50 University of Queensland Diamantina Institute, Translational Research Institute, University of  
114 Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.
- 115 51 Klinik für Kinder- und Jugendmedizin, Technical University Dresden, Dresden, Germany.
- 116 52 Clinic and Polyclinic of Dermatology, University Medicine Greifswald, Greifswald, Germany.
- 117 53 Department of Functional Genomics, Interfaculty Institute for Genetics and Functional Genomics,  
118 University Medicine and Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-University Greifswald, Greifswald, Germany.
- 119 54 Institute for Community Medicine, Study of Health in Pomerania/KEF, University Medicine  
120 Greifswald, Greifswald, Germany.
- 121 55 Institute of Human Genetics, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany.
- 122 56 Department of Genomics, Life & Brain Center, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany.
- 123 57 Division of Medical Genetics, University Hospital Basel, Basel, Switzerland.
- 124 58 Department of Biomedicine, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland.
- 125 59 Institute of Neuroscience and Medicine (INM-1), Structural and Functional Organisation of the  
126 Brain, Genomic Imaging, Research Centre Jülich, Jülich, Germany.
- 127 60 Institute of Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité - Universitätsmedizin  
128 Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
- 129 61 Institute of Clinical Epidemiology and Biometry, University of Würzburg, Würzburg, Germany.
- 130 62 Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Herz-Kreislaufkrankungen (DZHK) (German Research Centre  
131 for Cardiovascular Research), Munich Heart Alliance, Munich, Germany.
- 132 63 Institute of Clinical Molecular Biology, Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel, Kiel, Germany.
- 133 64 Institute of Epidemiology, Christian-Albrechts University Kiel, Kiel, Germany.
- 134 65 Department of Dermatology and Allergy, University of Bonn Medical Center, Bonn, Germany.
- 135 66 Unit of Living Environment and Health, National Institute for Health and Welfare, Kuopio, Finland.
- 136 67 Department of Public Health, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland.

- 137 68 Center for Life-course and Systems Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Oulu,  
138 Finland.
- 139 69 Biocenter Oulu, University of Oulu, Finland.
- 140 70 Research Centre for Prevention and Health, Capital Region of Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 141 71 The Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Basic Metabolic Research, Faculty of Health and Medical  
142 Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 143 72 Department of Internal Medicine, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 144 73 Department of Dermatology, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 145 74 Woolcock Institute of Medical Research, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.
- 146 75 Lung Institute of Western Australia, QE II Medical Centre Nedlands , Western Australia, Australia.
- 147 76 School of Medicine and Pharmacology, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia.
- 148 77 Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne, Melbourne,  
149 Australia.
- 150 78 Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne, Australia.
- 151 79 A full list of consortium members is provided in Supplementary Note 1, page 4.
- 152 80 National Children's Research Centre, Crumlin, Dublin, Ireland.
- 153 81 Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin, Ireland.
- 154 82 Clinical Medicine, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland.
- 155 83 Centre for Dermatology and Genetic Medicine, University of Dundee, Dundee, UK.
- 156 84 Department of Biology and Medical Genetics, University Hospital Motol and 2nd Faculty of  
157 Medicine of Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic.
- 158 85 Department of Clinical Allergology, Pomeranian, Pomeranian Medical University, Szczecin,  
159 Poland.
- 160 86 Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, Dr. von Hauner Children's Hospital, Division of  
161 Metabolic Diseases and Nutritional Medicine, Munich, Germany.
- 162 87 Center for Health Policy and Health Services Research, Henry Ford Health System, Detroit, MI,  
163 USA.
- 164 88 School of Nursing, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA.
- 165 89 Institute of Genetic Medicine, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

166 90 Division of Epidemiology, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo, Norway.

167 91 Channing Division of Network Medicine, Brigham & Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical  
168 School, Boston, MA, USA.

169 92 Center for Genomics and Personalized Medicine Research, Wake Forest School of Medicine,  
170 Winston-Salem, NC, USA.

171 93 Department of Biosciences and Nutrition, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

172 94 Center for Innovative Medicine (CIMED), Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

173 95 Sachs' Children's Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden.

174 96 Clinical and Experimental Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton,  
175 Southampton, UK.

176 97 Hospital del Mar Medical Research Institute (IMIM), Barcelona, Spain.

177 98 Department of Internal Medicine, Henry Ford Health System, Detroit, MI, USA.

178 99 National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Southampton Biomedical Research Centre,  
179 University of Southampton and University Hospital Southampton National Health Service (NHS)  
180 Foundation Trust, Southampton, UK.

181 100 Institute for Health and Care Research (EMGO), VU University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

182 101 Department of Clinical Medicine, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of  
183 Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.

184 102 Department of Medicine, Stanford School of Medicine, Stanford, California, USA.

185 103 University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Beatrix Children's Hospital,  
186 Department of Pediatric Pulmonology and Pediatric Allergology, Groningen Research Institute for  
187 Asthma and COPD (GRIAC), Groningen, the Netherlands.

188 104 Respiratory Epidemiology, Occupational Medicine and Public Health; National Heart and Lung  
189 Institute; Imperial College; London, UK.

190 105 Medical Research Council-Public Health England Centre for Environment and Health, School of  
191 Public Health, Imperial College London, London, UK.

192 106 Department of Bioengineering and Therapeutic Sciences, University of California, San Francisco,  
193 CA, USA.

194 107 Department of Clinical Experimental Research, Rigshospitalet, Glostrup, Denmark.

195 108 Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Medical Research Council (MRC) Health  
196 Protection Agency (HPE) Centre for Environment and Health, School of Public Health, Imperial  
197 College London, London, UK.

198 109 Center for Life Course Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland.

199 110 Unit of Primary Care, Oulu University Hospital,

200 Oulu, Finland.

201 111 Department of Dermatology, Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee, UK.

202 112 These authors contributed equally to this work.

203 113 These authors jointly directed this work.

204 114 All authors.

205

206 **Corresponding author: Lavinia Paternoster l.paternoster@bristol.ac.uk**

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208



209 **Abstract**

210 Genetic association studies have identified 21 loci associated with atopic dermatitis risk  
211 predominantly in populations of European ancestry. To identify further susceptibility loci for this  
212 common complex skin disease, we performed a meta-analysis of >15 million genetic variants in  
213 21,399 cases and 95,464 controls from populations of European, African, Japanese and Latino  
214 ancestry, followed by replication in 32,059 cases and 228,628 controls from 18 studies. We identified  
215 10 novel risk loci, bringing the total number of known atopic dermatitis risk loci to 31 (with novel  
216 secondary signals at 4 of these). Notably, the new loci include candidate genes with roles in  
217 regulation of innate host defenses and T-cell function, underscoring the important contribution of  
218 (auto-)immune mechanisms to atopic dermatitis pathogenesis.

219

220 Atopic dermatitis (eczema) is a common inflammatory skin disease affecting 15–30% of children and  
221 5-10% of adults<sup>1</sup>. Its pathogenesis involves skin barrier abnormalities and a T-cell-driven cutaneous  
222 inflammation. Atopic dermatitis has significant genetic contributions, with heritability estimates of  
223 up to 90%<sup>2</sup> in Europeans. The strongest known risk factors are null mutations of the filaggrin (*FLG*)  
224 gene, resulting in epidermal barrier deficiency<sup>3-5</sup>. Genome-wide association (GWA) studies have  
225 identified 20 additional loci (10 in Europeans, 8 in Japanese, 2 in Chinese populations), mostly  
226 implicated in immune dysregulation<sup>6-12</sup>. Genetic modeling suggests further loci may be identified with  
227 well-powered GWAS<sup>13</sup>. We therefore carried out a multi-ethnic meta-analysis of 26 studies comprising  
228 21,399 cases and 95,464 controls imputed to the 1000 Genomes Project Phase 1 reference panel  
229 (Supplementary Note 1 & Supplementary Table 1). 15,539,996 variants with  $\geq 1\%$  MAF were analyzed.  
230 A fixed effects meta-analysis of the 22 European studies identified 21 genome-wide significant  
231 ( $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$ ) loci (Table 1, Fig 1, Supplementary Figs 1-4), and a multi-ethnic meta-analysis identified  
232 an additional 6 loci with  $\log_{10}$  Bayes Factor  $> 6.1$ , 4 of which (10q21.2, 6p21.33, 11p13, 2p13.3) also  
233 showed nominal association in the European analysis (Table 1). These 27 loci included all 11 loci  
234 previously associated with atopic dermatitis in Europeans and 5 loci originally reported in Japanese.  
235 Three Japanese loci (6p21.33, 10q21.2, 2q12.1) were also strongly associated in the European  
236 analysis, whereas two (3q13.2, 11p15.4) may represent Japanese-specific signals (Supplementary  
237 Figs 1&2), with the European confidence interval ruling out all but very small effects ( $OR < 1.03$ , Table  
238 1). Furthermore, a locus originally reported in a Chinese GWAS (20q13.33) showed association in  
239 Europeans. We identified 11 novel loci for atopic dermatitis. Four (11q24.3, 10p15.1, 8q21.13,  
240 2p25.1) were previously associated with self-reported allergy<sup>14</sup>, and another (8q21.13) with  
241 asthma<sup>15</sup>. Two novel variants (5p13.2 and 2p25.1) showed statistically significant evidence of

242 heterogeneity between European and non-European studies (Cochran's Q  $p \sim 0.01$ , Supplementary  
243 Table 2). Both showed little evidence for association in non-Europeans (particularly Japanese,  
244 Supplementary Fig.2). The CIs also overlapped for all variants when comparing pediatric (defined as  
245 onset by age 6) with any-age onset studies (Supplementary Fig.3). Within Europeans there was  
246 some evidence of heterogeneity in effect sizes between studies amongst known variants (e.g.  
247 11q13.5  $I^2=62.9\%$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ; 11p13  $I^2=55.6\%$ ,  $p=0.0011$ ) but little evidence amongst novel variants ( $I^2$   
248 range=0-40%, all  $p > 0.02$ , Supplementary Fig.2). Nevertheless, studies with phenotype definition  
249 based on a dermatological exam tended to report larger effect sizes than studies using self-report  
250 (Supplementary Fig.4), which is to be expected, assuming a moderate degree of phenotypic  
251 misclassification in the latter. The inclusion of studies utilizing self-report is therefore likely to bias  
252 estimates of the effect size towards the null, and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the  
253 odds ratios from our study. Given the primary aim of GWA studies is the detection of novel loci, the  
254 increase in sample size achieved by including these studies is so large that any potential detrimental  
255 effect on statistical power is more than outweighed and the expected direction of bias means there  
256 is unlikely to be an issue of spurious findings (corroborated by Supplementary Fig.4)."

257 Seven of the 21 established asthma loci<sup>15-20</sup>, 7 of the 10 allergic sensitization loci<sup>21</sup>, and 6 of 14 self-  
258 reported allergy loci<sup>14</sup> showed association with atopic dermatitis ( $p < 0.05$ ), all with consistent  
259 directions of effect, supporting common atopic mechanisms in atopic dermatitis and allergy  
260 (Supplementary Table 3). However, several studies used here contribute to multiple GWASs, which  
261 may bias this overlap. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of the loci associated with other atopic  
262 conditions appear not to be strongly associated with atopic dermatitis.

263 Twenty-one of the 27 atopic dermatitis-associated loci have previously been implicated in other  
264 immune-mediated traits (Supplementary Table 4), most notably inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)  
265 and psoriasis. We therefore compared significant results from GWAS of IBD<sup>22</sup>, psoriasis<sup>23</sup>, ankylosing  
266 spondylitis<sup>24</sup>, multiple sclerosis<sup>25</sup>, rheumatoid arthritis<sup>26</sup> and type 1 diabetes<sup>27</sup> with results from our  
267 present study of atopic dermatitis. Of 163 established IBD risk variants, 39 reached  $p < 0.05$  for atopic  
268 dermatitis (Supplementary Table 5, 8.1 expected,  $p=2.4 \times 10^{-16}$ ), 35 with the same direction of effect  
269 (sign test  $p < 0.0001$ ), consistent with the observational association between the two diseases<sup>28-30</sup>. Of  
270 the 36 known psoriasis variants, 15 reached  $p < 0.05$  for atopic dermatitis (Supplementary Table 6, 1.8  
271 expected,  $p=6 \times 10^{-11}$ ), 10 with the same direction of effect (sign test  $p=0.30$ ). However, these  
272 conditions rarely clinically co-occur<sup>31</sup> and the most strongly associated genetic variants show  
273 opposite directions of effect<sup>32</sup>. Therefore our results, suggesting a more complex genetic  
274 relationship, might warrant further investigation. SNPs robustly associated with other auto-immune  
275 diseases were also more likely to be nominally associated with atopic dermatitis than expected by

276 chance, but there was little evidence of any consistency in direction of effect (Supplementary Tables  
277 7–10). These findings did not appear to be affected by contamination by common controls across  
278 studies. Analyses performed excluding common cohorts, yielded similar results (data not shown).

279 Conditional analysis showed evidence for secondary independent signals at 4 known atopic  
280 dermatitis loci (2q12.1, 4q27, 11p13, 5q31.1, Supplementary Table 11), one of which (5q31.1) has  
281 been previously reported<sup>9</sup>. In the epidermal differentiation complex (1q21.2–3, where *FLG* is  
282 located) the signals near *MRPS21* (rs7512552) and *IL6R* (rs12730935 or the known functional  
283 mutation rs2228145) were independent from *FLG*, whereas the top signal near *LCE3E* (rs61813875)  
284 appears to be partially tagging the R501X *FLG* mutation ( $r^2=0.49$ ) and showed no significant residual  
285 association ( $P>0.05$ ) after conditioning on the 4 most prevalent *FLG* mutations (Supplementary  
286 Tables 12&13).

287 To identify additional variants of biological relevance not reaching genome-wide significance, we  
288 applied gene-set enrichment analysis using Meta-Analysis Gene-set Enrichment of variant  
289 Associations (MAGENTA)<sup>33</sup> (Supplementary Table 14). A significant enrichment of 22 partially  
290 overlapping gene-sets ( $FDR\leq 0.01$ ) related to innate immune signaling and T-cell polarization was  
291 observed (Supplementary Fig.5).

292 For replication, we selected the lead SNPs from the 11 novel loci, 9 candidate SNPs from the  
293 MAGENTA analysis (with  $p<10^{-5}$  mapping to gene-sets with  $FDR<0.05$ ), and 3 SNPs representing  
294 potentially novel secondary signals. These were investigated in 18 studies (32,059 cases and 228,628  
295 controls, Supplementary Table 1). Amongst the European studies, 11 of the 20 novel loci reached a  
296 Bonferroni-corrected threshold ( $\alpha=0.0025$ ) with 1-sided tests in a fixed effects analysis (Table 2).  
297 However, one of these showed evidence of heterogeneity (10p15.1,  $p=0.041$ ) and was not significant  
298 in a random effects analysis ( $p=0.019$ , Supplementary Table 15). Two of the gene-set selected SNPs  
299 reached genome-wide significance in the combined analysis (2q37.1, 12q15). A random effects  
300 analysis of all replication cohorts (European and other ethnicities) show broadly consistent results  
301 (though only 6 reach genome-wide significance), with no clear population-specific effects  
302 (Supplementary Table 16 & Fig.6).

303 All 3 secondary signals showed significant association in the replication-phase conditional analysis  
304 (Supplementary Table 11).

305 As a preliminary step towards understanding the functional underpinnings of the atopic dermatitis  
306 genetic associations, we established a ‘credible set’ of SNPs (all with strong association) for each  
307 locus as described in the online methods<sup>34</sup>. We reviewed these SNPs’ functional annotations in

308 ENCODE Consortium and Roadmap Epigenomics Consortium data, evaluated expression quantitative  
309 trait locus (eQTL) effects in MuTHER<sup>35</sup>, reviewed evidence of differential expression, and surveyed  
310 relevant mouse mutants (see Supplementary Note 2 and Tables 17–21). Regions of DNase  
311 hypersensitivity from the ENCODE and Roadmap data<sup>36,37</sup> were strongly enriched for atopic  
312 dermatitis association compared to the rest of the genome (Supplementary Fig.7 & Table 22),  
313 particularly in immune cells (Th0, Th1, Th17  $p < 0.0001$ ), this enrichment was observed well below the  
314 genome-wide significance threshold, indicating the presence of additional undetected risk variants.  
315 We observed multiple cis-eQTLs (Bonferroni-corrected  $p < 7 \times 10^{-4}$ ) in lymphoblastoid cell lines (LCLs)  
316 or skin (Supplementary Tables 17&19). The most significant were two variants from the credible set  
317 at 2p13.3, which were strong eQTLs for CD207/langerin in skin (rs4852714  $p = 1.23 \times 10^{-10}$ , rs6723629  
318  $p = 1.67 \times 10^{-10}$ , LD with lead SNP  $r^2 = 0.56, D' = 0.96$ , and  $r^2 = 0.53, D' = 0.93$ , respectively, 99% posterior  
319 probability that atopic dermatitis and eQTL signals colocalize). rs4852714 is also in an open-  
320 chromatin region with histone marks indicative of promoter/enhancer activity in LCLs  
321 (Supplementary Tables 18,19 & Fig.8). *CD207* encodes an intracellular pattern recognition receptor  
322 expressed in subpopulations of dendritic cells, in particular epidermal Langerhans cells (LCs) which  
323 play a vital role in the induction of tolerance and direction of adaptive immune responses<sup>38</sup>. *CD207*  
324 binds to carbohydrates present e.g. on microorganisms and exerts anti-viral/anti-fungal defense  
325 mechanisms<sup>39</sup>. Of note, atopic dermatitis is characterized by an increased susceptibility towards skin  
326 infection with pathogens such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, herpes simplex virus, and *Malassezia*  
327 species<sup>40</sup>, and differences in langerin function might contribute to this dysregulated cutaneous  
328 immunity.

329 There is longstanding evidence that skin barrier defects and inappropriate immune responses to  
330 environmental antigens<sup>1</sup> contributes to atopic dermatitis. However, evidence for autoimmune  
331 mechanisms, in particular in the context of progression to the chronic phase, has only recently  
332 emerged<sup>41</sup>. Interestingly, the majority of our novel susceptibility loci harbor candidate genes with  
333 functional annotations related to autoimmunity. At 14q13.2, the lead SNP (rs2038255) is intronic to  
334 *PPP2R3C* (a protein phosphatase component regulating B-cell maturation and survival), the  
335 dysregulation of which has been associated with murine autoimmunity<sup>42</sup> and the signal colocalizes  
336 with a strong *KIAA0391* eQTL signal (Supplementary Table 19). The lead 5p13.2 variant (rs10214237)  
337 is located 4kb downstream of the gene encoding the alpha-chain of the IL7 receptor (IL7R), which is  
338 a key mediator in T-cell-driven autoimmunity and inflammation<sup>43</sup>. Of interest, the credible set  
339 contains an *IL7R* missense variant (rs6897932,  $p = 1.6 \times 10^{-7}$ ,  $r^2 = 0.94$  with lead SNP), which displays the  
340 same effect direction with multiple sclerosis<sup>44,45</sup>. The risk allele leads to an enhanced bioavailability  
341 of IL7<sup>46</sup>, which in mice causes severe dermatitis with intense pruritus and high IgE levels, i.e. atopic

342 dermatitis-like features<sup>47</sup>. Likewise, as part of the autosomal-dominant hyper-IgE syndrome, rare  
343 dominant negative mutations in the gene encoding *STAT3* (in which our lead 17q21.2 variant is  
344 intronic) cause severe dermatitis and high serum IgE levels, as well as recurrent *S.aureus* skin  
345 infections, which may be driven by impaired Th17 cell differentiation and effector function<sup>48,49</sup>.  
346 *STAT3* might thus represent an example for risk gene/pathway shared between a complex trait and a  
347 related Mendelian condition<sup>50,51</sup>, harboring highly penetrant severe effect rare mutations and  
348 common milder effect variants. At 8q21.13, the closest candidate gene is *ZBTB10* encoding a zinc  
349 finger protein, which is a putative repressor of the Sp1, Sp3 and Sp4 transcription factors<sup>52</sup>. Variants  
350 in moderate LD ( $r^2 > 0.7$ ) with the lead variant for atopic dermatitis were previously associated with  
351 self-reported allergy<sup>14</sup> and a combined asthma and hay fever phenotype<sup>53</sup>. However, although not  
352 excluding *ZBTB10* as the causal gene, the credible SNP set comprises a 47kb interval on the other  
353 side of a recombination peak (60cM/Mb). The variant most likely to be regulatory amongst this set,  
354 deletion rs5892724 ( $r^2 = 0.82$  with lead SNP), is located in open chromatin in several cell types  
355 including CD4+ helper T-cells, and affects a *STAT3* binding site<sup>49,54</sup>. At 11q24.3 the most plausible  
356 candidate gene is *ETS1*, which encodes a transcription factor with a range of immune functions  
357 including Th17 and B-cell differentiation and function; *ETS1*-deficient mice display autoimmune  
358 features<sup>55</sup>. *ETS1* appears to be additionally involved in keratinocyte differentiation and formation of  
359 the cornified envelope<sup>56</sup>. Additional variants identified through the gene-set approach implicate  
360 genes with cytokine signaling functions (*INPP5D*, *TRAF3*, *SOCS3* and a cytokine cluster on 12q15).

361 In conclusion, we have identified 10 new loci robustly associated with atopic dermatitis in Europeans  
362 (6 of which also reach genome-wide significance in random effects analysis across studies of all  
363 ethnicities), bringing the total number of susceptibility loci to 31 (24 in Europeans), with evidence of  
364 secondary signals at 4 of these. Altogether, in the subset of European studies with clinically defined  
365 cases, previously established and newly identified variants explain approximately 12.3% and 2.6% of  
366 the variance in liability, respectively (Supplementary Table 23). All novel susceptibility loci are  
367 related to (auto-)immune regulation, in particular innate signaling and T-cell activation and  
368 specification, and there appears to be a substantial genetic overlap with other inflammatory and  
369 autoimmune diseases. Whilst not detracting from the importance of maintaining the skin barrier in  
370 the prevention and treatment of atopic dermatitis, our findings lend support to new therapeutic  
371 approaches targeted at immune modulation<sup>57</sup>.

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379

#### 380 Author Contributions

381 **Conceived and designed the experiments:** L.P., M.S., H. Baurecht, D.P.S., J.A.C., K.B., J.P.T., H.T.d.D.,  
382 P.M.A.S., F.L.X., M.B., J.Y.T., A.J.H., G.D.S., E.R., J.P., L.L.H., J.C.d.J., F. Rivadeneira, A.H., V.W.V.J.,  
383 S.G.M.A.P., N.J.E., A.G.U., D.S.P., B.F., A.C., D.A.M., E. Melén, C.O., A.S., B.J., J.W.H., H. Bisgaard, J.S.,  
384 N.M.P.H., L.K.W., K.M.G., D.I.B., M. Melbye, G.H.K., Y.A.L., N.H., D.J., X.J.Z., H.H., L.D., A.L., M.R.J.,  
385 M.T., S.J. Brown, J.H., D.M.E., S.W.

386 **Performed the experiments:** L.P., K.B., P.M.A.S., F.L.X., M.B., E.K.M., G.A.L., M. Kubo, W.L.M., J.P.K.,  
387 J.Z., E.R., F. Rivadeneira, A.G.U., J.L., X.Y.Y., L.D.S., L.E.C., A.M., C.E., D.S.P., C.M.T.T., M.I., S.H., N.V.T.,  
388 B.J., H. Bisgaard, N.M.P.H., L.K.W., K.M.G., G.H.K., A.L., S.J. Brown, D.M.E., S.W.

389 **Performed the statistical analysis:** L.P., M.S., J.W., H. Baurecht, M. Hotze, D.P.S., J.A.C., C.T., A.T.,  
390 A.B., A.C.A., H.T.d.D., M.A.F., E.A., P.M.A.S., J.R.G., I.M., J.E.G., M.P.Y., C.J.X., L.C., M.M.G.B., C.V., S.J.  
391 Barton, A.M.L., I.C., E.K.M., G.A.L., S.B., R.A.M., F. Rüschenhof, A.K., J.P.K., J.Z., L.L.H., F. Rivadeneira,  
392 N.J.E., J.R., J.L., X.B.Z., X.D.Z., D.H., B.F., F.G., P.H., C.M.T.T., E.T., B.P., J.J.Y., N.V.T., R.M., C.A.W., L.D.,  
393 D.A.H., D.M.E.

394 **Analysed the data:** L.P., M.S., J.W., H. Baurecht, M. Hotze, D.P.S., J.A.C., K.B., C.T., A.B., A.C.A., J.P.T.,  
395 H.T.d.D., M.A.F., E.A., P.M.A.S., F.L.X., J.R.G., I.M., J.E.G., M.P.Y., C.J.X., L.C., M.M.G.B., C.V., S.J.  
396 Barton, A.M.L., I.C., G.A.L., J.B., S.B., R.A.M., F. Rüschenhof, A.K., A.J.H., M. Horikoshi, S.S., L.L.H., F.  
397 Rivadeneira, N.J.E., A.G.U., M.C.M., J.R., J.L., X.B.Z., X.D.Z., X.Y.Y., D.H., B.F., F.G., J.J.H., C.M.M., P.H.,  
398 C.M.T.T., E.T., B.P., J.J.Y., M.I., S.H., N.V.T., E. Melén, B.J., L.K.W., C.A.W., Y.A.L., N.H., L.D., A.L., M.T.,  
399 D.A.H., D.G., S.J. Brown, D.M.E.

400 **Contributed reagents/material/analysis tools:** L.P., J.W., H. Baurecht, M. Hotze, C.T., H.T.d.D.,  
401 P.M.A.S., M.P.Y., C.E.P., A.M.L., M.B., S.B., T.H., M. Kubo, W.L.M., J.Z., G.D.S., M. Macek, M. Kurek,  
402 M.A.L.K., E. Mangold, A.P., A.F., W.L., N.N., R.F.H., N.G., J.C.d.J., F. Rivadeneira, A.H., V.W.V.J.,  
403 S.G.M.A.P., N.J.E., A.G.U., G.B.M., P.J.T., C.F.R., NA, J.L., L.D.S., M.A.M., G.M.O., C.M.R.F., A.A., G.H.,  
404 C.O.S., B.K., D.H., C.E., D.S.P., V.B., T.S., B.P., J.J.Y., C.L.R., S.T.W., D.A.M., S.C., T.K., C.S., E. Melén, S.L.,  
405 C.O., B.A.R., B.J., J.W.H., J.S., L.K.W., K.M.G., M. Melbye, G.H.K., Y.A.L., N.H., D.J., W.H.I.M., A.D.I.,  
406 X.J.Z., H.H., C.G., E.G.B., N.G.M., L.D., M.R.J., M.M.N., M.T., D.A.H., S.J. Brown, J.H., S.W.

407 **Wrote the paper:** L.P., M.S., J.W., H. Baurecht, M. Hotze, D.P.S., J.A.C., K.B., A.J.H., S.J. Brown,  
408 D.M.E., S.W.

409 **Revising and reviewing paper:** L.P., M.S., J.W., H. Baurecht, M. Hotze, D.P.S., J.A.C., K.B., C.T., A.T.,  
410 A.B., A.C.A., J.P.T., H.T.d.D., M.A.F., E.A., P.M.A.S., F.L.X., J.R.G., I.M., J.E.G., M.P.Y., C.J.X., L.C.,  
411 M.M.G.B., C.V., C.E.P., S.J. Barton, A.M.L., I.C., M.B., E.K.M., G.A.L., S.B., R.A.M., F. Rüschenhof, A.K.,  
412 J.Y.T., T.H., M. Kubo, W.L.M., A.J.H., J.P.K., J.Z., G.D.S., M. Macek, M. Kurek, M.A.L.K., E. Mangold,  
413 E.R., A.P., A.F., W.L., N.N., R.F.H., M. Horikoshi, J.P., S.S., L.L.H., N.G., J.C.d.J., F. Rivadeneira, A.H.,  
414 V.W.V.J., S.G.M.A.P., N.J.E., A.G.U., G.B.M., P.J.T., M.C.M., C.F.R., J.R., J.L., X.B.Z., X.D.Z., X.Y.Y., L.D.S.,  
415 M.A.M., G.M.O., C.M.R.F., L.E.C., A.A., G.H., A.M., C.O.S., B.K., D.H., C.E., D.S.P., B.F., F.G., J.J.H.,  
416 C.M.M., P.H., V.B., T.S., C.M.T.T., E.T., B.P., J.J.Y., M.I., S.H., N.V.T., C.L.R., R.M., W.N., A.C., S.T.W.,  
417 D.A.M., S.C., T.K., C.S., E. Melén, S.L., C.O., B.A.R., A.S., B.J., J.W.H., H. Bisgaard, J.S., N.M.P.H., L.K.W.,

418 K.M.G., C.A.W., D.I.B., M. Melbye, G.H.K., Y.A.L., N.H., D.J., W.H.I.M., A.D.I., X.J.Z., H.H., C.G., E.G.B.,  
419 N.G.M., L.D., A.L., M.R.J., M.M.N., M.T., D.A.H., D.G., S.J. Brown, J.H., D.M.E., S.W.

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421

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550

551 **Figure Legend**

552 **Figure 1. Atopic dermatitis GWAS meta-analysis results.** (A) Manhattan plot of European fixed  
553 effects meta-analysis. (B) Manhattan plot of the multi-ethnic MANTRA meta-analysis of all studies.  
554 Arrows mark variants not associated in the European-only analysis. (C) QQ plot of the European  
555 analysis -  $\lambda=1.054$ .

**Table 1. Discovery Results. The index variant for loci with  $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$  in the European analysis or  $\log_{10}BF > 6.1$  in the multi-ethnic MANTRA analysis. Previous atopy trait associations with these loci are listed.**

Variant	Locus	Nearest Gene†	EA/OA	European – fixed effects				All cohorts – MANTRA		Known atopy loci?	
				N (studies)	EAF	OR (95% CI)	P-value	N (studies)	log <sub>10</sub> BF	trait	references
<b>KNOWN LOCI</b>											
rs61813875	1q21.3	CRCT1/LCE3E (FLG) <sup>§</sup>	G/C	93,326 (18)	0.02	1.61 (1.48–1.75)	<b>5.6x10<sup>-29</sup></b>	96,419 (20)	<b>25.53</b>	AD	3,4,5
rs10791824	11q13.1	<b>OVOL1</b>	G/A	102,761 (21)	0.57	1.12 (1.09–1.15)	<b>2.1x10<sup>-19</sup></b>	116,556 (25)	<b>21.56</b>	AD	9
rs12188917	5q31.1	RAD50/IL13	C/T	102,761 (21)	0.21	1.14 (1.10–1.17)	<b>4.0x10<sup>-17</sup></b>	116,554 (25)	<b>17.24</b>	AD,A,IgE	9,18,58
rs6419573	2q12.1	IL18R1/IL18RAP	T/C	102,760 (21)	0.26	1.11 (1.08–1.14)	<b>1.5x10<sup>-13</sup></b>	116,557 (25)	<b>18.10</b>	AD,A,AS,SRA	8,14,18,21
rs2212434	11q13.5	<b>C11orf30/LRRC32</b>	T/C	102,761 (21)	0.45	1.09 (1.07–1.12)	<b>4.6x10<sup>-13</sup></b>	116,557 (25)	<b>13.02</b>	AD,AS,SRA,AR,A	11,14,15,21,59
rs4809219	20q13.33	<b>RTEL1–TNFRSF6B</b>	C/A	102,760 (21)	0.27	0.90 (0.87–0.93)	<b>7.0x10<sup>-13</sup></b>	116,555 (25)	<b>11.98</b>	AD	7,10
rs2918307	19p13.2	ADAMTS10/ACTL9	G/A	100,707 (20)	0.16	1.12 (1.08–1.16)	<b>4.6x10<sup>-12</sup></b>	114,504 (24)	<b>12.98</b>	AD	9
rs2041733	16p13.13	<b>CLEC16A</b>	C/T	103,066 (22)	0.55	0.92 (0.90–0.94)	<b>2.5x10<sup>-11</sup></b>	116,862 (26)	<b>10.11</b>	AD,A+HF	7,53
rs12730935*	1q21.3	<b>IL6R</b>	A/G	102,760 (21)	0.39	1.08 (1.05–1.11)	<b>6.1x10<sup>-11</sup></b>	116,556 (25)	<b>7.15</b>	AD,A	12,15
4:123243592†	4q27	<b>KIAA109 (IL2)<sup>§</sup></b>	R/I	102,761 (21)	0.37	1.08 (1.05–1.10)	<b>4.2x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	107,119 (24)	<b>7.32</b>	AD,AS,SRA	7,14,21
rs4713555	6p21.32	<b>HLA-DRB1/HLA-DQA1</b>	T/G	91,217 (15)	0.27	0.91 (0.89–0.94)	<b>5.4x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	105,014 (19)	<b>10.76</b>	AD,AS,SRA,A	6,8,14,18,21
rs2944542	10q21.2	<b>ZNF365</b>	C/G	102,762 (21)	0.41	0.94 (0.92–0.96)	1.2x10 <sup>-6</sup>	116,559 (25)	<b>7.56</b>	AD	8,10
rs145809981	6p21.33	<b>MICB</b>	T/C	97,697 (19)	0.14	0.91 (0.88–0.95)	1.5x10 <sup>-6</sup>	110,228 (22)	<b>7.33</b>	AD,AS,SRA	8,14,21
rs4312054	11p15.4	OR10A3/NLRP10	G/T	102,760 (21)	0.41	1.00 (0.97–1.02)	0.744	116,556 (25)	<b>7.00</b>	AD	8
rs1249910	3q13.2	<b>CCDC80/CD200R1L</b>	A/G	99,164 (20)	0.34	0.98 (0.96–1.01)	0.137	112,960 (24)	<b>6.86</b>	AD	8
rs2592555	11p13	<b>PRR5L</b>	C/T	102,760 (21)	0.27	0.93 (0.90–0.96)	8.7x10 <sup>-7</sup>	116,551 (25)	<b>6.78</b>	AD	7
<b>NOVEL LOCI</b>											
rs2038255	14q13.2	<b>PPP2R3C</b>	T/C	102,760 (21)	0.18	1.11 (1.07–1.14)	<b>1.8x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	116,557 (25)	<b>8.40</b>		
rs7127307	11q24.3	–/ETS1	C/T	103,066 (22)	0.47	0.93 (0.90–0.95)	<b>3.9x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	116,855 (26)	<b>9.08</b>	SRA	14
rs7512552	1q21.2	C1orf51/MRPS21	T/C	102,762 (21)	0.49	0.93 (0.91–0.95)	<b>9.1x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	116,544 (25)	<b>6.91</b>		
rs6473227	8q21.13	MIR5708/ZBTB10	A/C	102,761 (21)	0.61	0.93 (0.91–0.95)	<b>1.4x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	116,557 (25)	<b>7.54</b>	(AD),SRA,A+HF	9,14,53
rs6602364	10p15.1	IL15RA/IL2RA	G/C	103,065 (22)	0.45	1.08 (1.05–1.10)	<b>1.5x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	116,855 (26)	<b>7.86</b>	(SRA)	14
rs10214237	5p13.2	<b>IL7R/CAPSL</b>	C/T	102,761 (21)	0.27	0.93 (0.90–0.95)	<b>2.9x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	116,554 (25)	4.79		
rs10199605	2p25.1	<b>LINC00299/–</b>	A/G	102,760 (21)	0.30	0.93 (0.90–0.95)	<b>3.4x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	116,557 (25)	4.67	(SRA)	14
rs4643526	2p16.1	<b>PUS10</b>	A/G	103,066 (22)	0.19	1.09 (1.06–1.12)	<b>3.5x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	107,425 (25)	<b>6.31</b>		
rs12951971	17q21.2	<b>STAT3</b>	G/T	102,761 (21)	0.09	1.13 (1.08–1.17)	<b>4.1x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	107,120 (24)	5.33		
rs7625909	3p21.1	<b>SFMBT1/RFT1</b>	T/C	102,761 (21)	0.32	1.07 (1.05–1.10)	<b>4.9x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	116,558 (25)	5.83		
rs112111458	2p13.3	CD207/VAX2	G/A	102,760 (21)	0.13	0.91 (0.87–0.94)	1.4x10 <sup>-7</sup>	116,553 (25)	<b>6.57</b>		

\*in LD with known functional mutation rs2228145 ( $r^2=0.86$ )

†nearby SNP (rs6827756, bp position: 123184411) in LD ( $r^2=0.97$  in 1000genomes) showed similar association,  $\log_{10}BF=7.21$ , European fixed effects p-value  $3 \times 10^{-9}$

‡Nearest genes are the two flanking genes if intergenic (with the closer gene in **bold**, - indicates no gene within 250kb), single genes denote the variant is intronic.

§ at 1q21.2: variant is closest to LCE3A, but previously associated FLG is within 250kb, at 4q27: variant is within an intron of KIAA109, but previously associated IL2 is within 150kb,

AD= atopic dermatitis, A=asthma, AS=allergic sensitization, SRA=self-reported allergy, AR=allergic rhinitis, A+HF=asthma and hayfever combined,

P-values and  $-\log_{10}$  Bayes Factors (BF) in **bold** indicate genome-wide significant results

EA/OA= effect allele/other allele, EAF = effect allele frequency, OR=odds ratio, CI=confidence interval, N= sample size, BF= bayes factor

**Table 2. Replication results for the novel genome-wide significant loci and loci identified in the MAGENTA gene-set enrichment analysis. Discovery, replication and combined results are shown.**

Variant	Locus	Nearest Gene	EA/OA	EAF	Discovery European			Replication European			Overall European - fixed effects			het	random effects p-values	
					N (studies)	OR (95% CI)	P-value	N (studies)	OR (95% CI)	P-value <sup>‡</sup>	N	OR (95% CI)	P-value	p-value	European	all studies
<b>NOVEL GENOMEWIDE SIGNIFICANT LOCI</b>																
rs7512552	1q21.2	C1orf51/MRPS21	T/C	0.49	102762 (21)	0.93(0.91–0.95)	9.1x10 <sup>-10</sup>	257019 (15)	0.98(0.96–0.99)	0.0048	359781	0.96(0.94–0.97)	<b>5.41x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	<b>0.002</b>	1.5x10 <sup>-7</sup>	1.3x10 <sup>-7</sup>
rs10199605	2p25.1	LINC00299/-	A/G	0.30	102760 (21)	0.93(0.90–0.95)	3.4x10 <sup>-8</sup>	256958 (15)	0.97(0.95–0.99)	0.0045	359718	0.96(0.94–0.97)	<b>3.97x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	<b>0.024</b>	4.1x10 <sup>-6</sup>	1.5x10 <sup>-5</sup>
rs4643526	2p16.1	PUS10	A/G	0.19	103066 (22)	1.09(1.06–1.12)	3.5x10 <sup>-8</sup>	257050 (14)	1.03(1.01–1.05)	0.0058	360116	1.05(1.03–1.07)	5.94x10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.249	3.8x10 <sup>-6</sup>	1.1x10 <sup>-5</sup>
rs112111458	2p13.3	CD207/VAX2	G/A	0.13	102760 (21)	0.91(0.87–0.94)	1.4x10 <sup>-7</sup>	257019 (15)	0.95(0.93–0.98)	<b>7.95x10<sup>-4</sup></b>	359779	0.94(0.92–0.96)	<b>9.38x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	0.076	4.4x10 <sup>-6</sup>	1.6x10 <sup>-7</sup>
rs11923593*	3p21.1	SFMBT1/RFT1	G/A	0.32	102761 (21)	1.07(1.04–1.10)	9.7x10 <sup>-8</sup>	257002 (15)	1.01(0.99–1.03)	0.2600	359763	1.03(1.01–1.05)	1.30x10 <sup>-4</sup>	0.081	8.7x10 <sup>-5</sup>	1.7x10 <sup>-5</sup>
rs10214237	5p13.2	IL7R/CAPSL	C/T	0.27	102761 (21)	0.93(0.90–0.95)	2.9x10 <sup>-8</sup>	257010 (15)	0.94(0.93–0.96)	<b>6.71x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	359771	0.94(0.92–0.95)	<b>2.86x10<sup>-14</sup></b>	0.773	<b>2.9x10<sup>-14</sup></b>	<b>1.5x10<sup>-10</sup></b>
rs6473227	8q21.13	MIR5708/ZBTB10	A/C	0.61	102761 (21)	0.93(0.91–0.95)	1.4x10 <sup>-9</sup>	257006 (15)	0.95(0.93–0.97)	<b>4.53x10<sup>-9</sup></b>	359767	0.94(0.93–0.95)	<b>2.22x10<sup>-16</sup></b>	0.622	<b>2.2x10<sup>-16</sup></b>	<b>5.3x10<sup>-18</sup></b>
rs6602364	10p15.1	IL15RA/IL2RA	G/C	0.45	103065 (22)	1.08(1.05–1.10)	1.5x10 <sup>-9</sup>	256993 (15)	1.03(1.01–1.05)	<b>3.91x10<sup>-4</sup></b>	360058	1.05(1.03–1.06)	<b>1.33x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	<b>0.041</b>	3.6x10 <sup>-6</sup>	1.6x10 <sup>-6</sup>
rs7127307	11q24.3	-/ETS1	C/T	0.47	103066 (22)	0.93(0.90–0.95)	3.9x10 <sup>-9</sup>	257034 (15)	0.94(0.93–0.96)	<b>2.51x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	360100	0.94(0.92–0.95)	<b>1.48x10<sup>-18</sup></b>	0.935	<b>1.5x10<sup>-18</sup></b>	<b>1.0x10<sup>-20</sup></b>
rs2143950*	14q13.2	PPP2R3C	T/C	0.17	102762 (21)	1.10(1.07–1.14)	6.8x10 <sup>-10</sup>	249940 (12)	1.07(1.04–1.09)	<b>9.92x10<sup>-8</sup></b>	352702	1.08(1.06–1.10)	<b>1.78x10<sup>-15</sup></b>	0.092	4.8x10 <sup>-7</sup>	<b>8.6x10<sup>-10</sup></b>
rs17881320*	17q21.2	STAT3	T/G	0.08	96796 (19)	1.12(1.07–1.17)	2.0x10 <sup>-6</sup>	249949 (12)	1.05(1.02–1.09)	<b>1.47x10<sup>-3</sup></b>	346745	1.08(1.05–1.11)	1.41x10 <sup>-7</sup>	0.405	6.2x10 <sup>-7</sup>	2.6x10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>MAGENTA GENE-SET ENRICHMENT ANALYSIS LOCI</b>																
rs1057258	2q37.1	INPP5D	T/C	0.18	101012 (21)	0.94(0.91–0.97)	6.57x10 <sup>-5</sup>	257030 (15)	0.94(0.92–0.96)	<b>3.79x10<sup>-7</sup></b>	358042	0.94(0.92–0.96)	<b>1.72x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	0.811	<b>1.7x10<sup>-10</sup></b>	<b>4.1x10<sup>-13</sup></b>
rs6872156	5q35.1	DUSP1	A/G	0.24	103066 (22)	0.93(0.91–0.96)	2.35x10 <sup>-6</sup>	257047 (15)	0.97(0.95–0.99)	0.0055	360113	0.96(0.94–0.97)	8.08x10 <sup>-7</sup>	0.340	1.8x10 <sup>-6</sup>	2.7x10 <sup>-7</sup>
rs7016497	8q24.3	PTK2	T/C	0.21	103066 (22)	0.94(0.91–0.97)	1.09x10 <sup>-4</sup>	257040 (15)	0.98(0.95–1.00)	0.0290	360106	0.96(0.95–0.98)	9.37x10 <sup>-5</sup>	0.757	9.4x10 <sup>-5</sup>	1.4x10 <sup>-6</sup>
rs2905493	11q12.2	CD6/CD5	T/C	0.01	89617 (15)	0.78(0.68–0.89)	2.63x10 <sup>-4</sup>	254992 (13)	1.01(0.94–1.08)	0.6040	344609	0.95(0.90–1.02)	0.1432	0.150	0.419	0.098
rs1799986	12q13.3	LRP1(STAT6) <sup>†</sup>	T/C	0.15	99165 (20)	0.91(0.88–0.94)	1.14x10 <sup>-7</sup>	257022 (15)	0.98(0.96–1.01)	0.1140	356187	0.96(0.94–0.98)	2.90x10 <sup>-5</sup>	0.182	1.1x10 <sup>-4</sup>	1.6x10 <sup>-3</sup>
rs2227483	12q15	IL22(& IFNG) <sup>‡</sup>	A/T	0.44	102762 (21)	0.94(0.92–0.97)	2.27x10 <sup>-6</sup>	253446 (14)	0.94(0.92–0.96)	<b>3.55x10<sup>-11</sup></b>	356208	0.94(0.93–0.96)	<b>6.66x10<sup>-16</sup></b>	0.664	<b>6.7x10<sup>-16</sup></b>	<b>1.2x10<sup>-17</sup></b>
rs7146581	14q32.32	TRAF3	T/C	0.24	102760 (21)	0.95(0.92–0.97)	1.44x10 <sup>-4</sup>	256971 (15)	0.96(0.94–0.98)	<b>5.67x10<sup>-5</sup></b>	359731	0.95(0.94–0.97)	6.17x10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.219	1.2x10 <sup>-4</sup>	4.1x10 <sup>-6</sup>
rs11657987	17q25.3	PGS1(SOCS3) <sup>‡</sup>	T/G	0.49	100695 (21)	1.06(1.04–1.09)	1.07x10 <sup>-6</sup>	257019 (15)	1.03(1.01–1.05)	<b>1.04x10<sup>-3</sup></b>	357714	1.04(1.03–1.06)	5.09x10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.235	9.7x10 <sup>-5</sup>	6.0x10 <sup>-5</sup>
rs77714197	19q13.11	CEBPA	T/C	0.02	87690 (14)	1.35(1.19–1.54)	3.31x10 <sup>-6</sup>	256447 (14)	0.98(0.89–1.08)	0.6540	344137	1.10(1.02–1.18)	0.0139	<b>0.048</b>	0.102	0.116

\*rs11923593 replaces rs7625909 ( $r^2=0.98$ ), rs2143950 replaces rs2038255 ( $r^2=0.94$ ), rs17881320 replaces rs12951971 ( $r^2=0.75$ ) in the replication analysis

<sup>†</sup>rs1799986 is within LRP1, but was selected in the MAGENTA analysis due to its proximity to STAT6. rs2227483 is with IL22, but was selected due to its proximity to both IL22 and IFNG.

rs11657987 is within PGS1, but was selected due to its proximity to SOCS3

<sup>‡</sup> Replication p-values for a 1-sided test

Replication p-values in **bold** were considered significant ( $p<0.0025$ ), overall p-values in **bold** are genome-wide significant, heterogeneity p-values $<0.05$  are in bold

EA/OA= effect allele/other allele, EAF = effect allele frequency, OR=odds ratio, CI=confidence interval, N= sample size, het=heterogeneity

## ONLINE METHODS

### **GWAS meta-analysis**

We carried out genome-wide association (GWA) analysis for atopic dermatitis case/control status in 26 individual studies (Supplementary Table 1), comprising a total of 21,399 cases and 95,464 controls. The majority of these studies included individuals of only European ancestry (22 studies, 18,900 cases, 84,166 controls). We also included one study of Japanese individuals (RIKEN, 1,472 cases, 7,966 controls), one study of African American individuals (SAPPHIRE, 422 cases and 844 controls), one study of Latin American individuals (GALA II, 300 cases, 1,592 controls) and one study with individuals of mixed non-European ancestry (Generation R, 305 cases, 896 controls).

Each cohort separately imputed their genetic data to 1000 Genomes Project Phase 1 (the majority to the March 2012 release, Supplementary Table 1) and carried out GWA analysis across all imputed variants. Before meta-analysis we restricted each study to only those variants with minor allele frequency (MAF)>1% and moderate imputation quality score (Rsq>0.3 for variants imputed in MACH and proper info>0.4 for IMPUTE). For some cohorts additional quality control filters were applied (full methods for each study are available in Supplementary Note 1).

Meta-analysis was conducted for Europeans only in GWAMA (using fixed effects) and for all ethnicities combined in MANTRA<sup>60</sup>. Rather than imposing a fixed or random effects model, MANTRA accounts for the heterogeneity of effects between ethnicities by allowing the studies to cluster according to allele frequency profile (and hence population genetic similarity). To prevent very small European studies (with less precise estimates of the allele frequencies) from having undue weight in our analysis we fixed the Europeans to cluster together by using the European fixed effects results in the MANTRA analysis. Variants with  $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$  in the European analysis were considered to be associated, as were any additional variants with  $(\log_{10})$  Bayes Factor (BF)>6.1 (equivalent to  $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$ )<sup>61</sup> in the MANTRA analysis. Each locus is represented in the results table by the variant with the strongest evidence for association. Heterogeneity was assessed using the  $I^2$  statistic and Cochran's Q test. Meta-analysis results were also stratified according to ethnicity, method of case diagnosis and age of onset to explore sources of heterogeneity.

For the Epidermal-differentiation complex region (where the *FLG* gene is located and which has previously shown complex association results), we repeated the association tests (across the region between 150.2–154.5Mb on chromosome 1) conditioning on the four most common *FLG* variants (R501X, 2282del4, R2447X, S3247X) in the individual studies where these were available (10 studies,

20,384 individuals, Supplementary Table 12). These were meta-analyzed to identify whether there were any remaining independent association signals in this region.

### **Identification of independent secondary signals at associated loci**

To identify secondary independent signals at each of the other associated loci, we carried out conditional analysis of the European meta-analysis results using GCTA<sup>62</sup>, with the ALSPAC 1000 Genomes imputation (restricted to variants with MAF>1% and imputation quality proper info score>0.8) serving as the reference. The regions tested were +/-250kb surrounding the top hit at each locus. Locus specific significance thresholds were estimated by first calculating the effective number of tests in each 500kb region using Nyholt's procedure<sup>63</sup> and the 1000 Genomes reference data (European). For each locus we estimated the new threshold for locus-wide error rate of 5% by dividing alpha (0.05) by the corresponding number of effective tests in that region ( $\alpha$ -values are shown in Supplementary Table 11). For 4q27 we defined the region as +/-500kb as a known hit was just less than 500kb from the top SNP in our analysis. We conditioned each region on the top hit from our meta-analysis. Any variant that surpassed the locus-specific threshold was considered an independent secondary signal.

### **MAGENTA gene-set enrichment analysis**

We tested our meta-analysis results for enriched gene-sets using MAGENTA<sup>33</sup>. This method assigns SNPs to genes based on genomic distance (SNPs are assigned if within 110kb upstream or 40kb downstream of each gene), and generates gene-based summary p-values. Subsequently, genes are assigned to gene-sets (using curated repositories including GO-data, Biocarta, PANTHER, KEGG, etc.) and each gene-set is assigned a p-value by comparing gene summary p-values to a null model where SNPs are drawn randomly 10,000 times (normalizing for the number of SNPs genotyped in each gene) and controlling for false discovery rate (FDR) at  $\alpha=0.05$ . ~10,000 gene-sets were tested. As MAGENTA requires a p-value as input and to take account of the differing effects between populations, we re-analyzed our meta-analysis of all studies using a random effects model, to serve as input to the MAGENTA analysis. All genes in the HLA region (chr6:29710331–33150000) were removed from the analysis. In order to identify additional variants of interest to take forward to replication we examined any pathway with FDR<0.05. From these gene-sets we took forward to replication any additional loci with a genetic variant  $p<10^{-5}$ .

### **Cross-phenotype comparisons**

The NHGRI GWAS catalog<sup>64</sup> was mined for traits with reported associations at each of our genome-wide significant loci. To further investigate the genetic overlap between atopic dermatitis and auto-

immune diseases, we took the genome-wide significant loci from recent GWAS of IBD<sup>22</sup> and psoriasis<sup>23</sup> ankylosing spondylitis<sup>24</sup>, multiple sclerosis<sup>25</sup>, rheumatoid arthritis<sup>26</sup> and type 1 diabetes<sup>27</sup> and extracted the atopic dermatitis results for these variants from our European discovery GWAS, noting whether the variant was associated ( $p < 0.05$ ) with atopic dermatitis (testing enrichment of overlap using the 2-sided binomial exact test) and carried the same or opposite direction of effect between the two traits (tested using the sign test).

## Replication

The top SNP from the 11 novel associated regions ( $\log_{10}BF > 6.1$  or  $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$ ) were taken forward to replication, along with 9 suggestively associated SNPs ( $p < 10^{-5}$ ) that were in genes highlighted in the MAGENTA analysis as good candidates. In addition, we included any variants with evidence for being secondary independent signals at associated loci. Replication consisted of 18 studies (32,059 cases and 228,628 controls) with genome-wide imputed data available or custom genotyping (Supplementary Table 1). Studies of European ethnicity were combined in fixed effects meta-analyses in GWAMA. We also carried out random effects meta-analysis for the European studies to assess association for variants which showed evidence of heterogeneity ( $p < 0.05$ ). Significant association in the replication phase was determined by 1-sided p-values meeting a Bonferroni-corrected threshold ( $\alpha = 0.05/20 = 0.0025$ ). Random effects meta-analyses of replication studies of all ethnicities were also carried out and forest plots examined for evidence of population-specific effects. For the replication of the three secondary signals, the secondary SNPs were tested for association after conditioning on the top SNP in each of the European cohorts. These results were then combined in fixed effects meta-analyses.

## Credible sets

In order to assemble a sensible list of variants at each locus for functional look-ups, we constructed credible sets<sup>34</sup> that represent those SNPs most likely to be causal based on statistical evidence from the MANTRA analysis (or from the European analysis for the three variants that appeared to be European-specific). The European-only GWAS was repeated in MANTRA to generate BFs required for the credible set analysis. Bayes factors were used to calculate posterior probabilities for all SNPs in each region (+/-1Mb), the minimum set of SNPs that had a cumulative posterior probability of at least 95% made up each credible set. These sets can be interpreted similar to confidence intervals, in that assuming the association signal at a locus can be attributed to a single causal variant (and that the true causal variant is included in the analysis and has been well-imputed), the 95% credible set contains that causal variant with 95% probability. Given that a 1000 Genomes imputation analysis may not include the true causal variant or that the associations may be driven by more than one



causal variant, we do not expect these credible sets to necessarily contain the causal variants at the suggested 95% probability. Nevertheless, they demonstrate in addition to the 'top SNP', which neighbouring variants also show strong association with atopic dermatitis and we find them useful in assessing the size of the regions of interest and for defining a set of variants to follow-up. As the posterior probabilities for the MAGENTA identified credible sets are extremely large (due to the weaker signals at these loci), we instead carried out functional look-ups for all variants with  $r^2 \geq 0.8$  of the top hit for these loci.

### Functional look-ups

For variants identified as part of a credible set, we carried out look-ups in the following functional data resources; (i) regulomeDB and Haploreg were mined for evidence of coding or regulatory function (these resources collate annotations [e.g., coding variation, regulatory chromatin marks, DNase I hypersensitivity, protein binding and motif alteration] from the ENCODE Consortium, the NIH Roadmap Epigenomics Mapping Consortium, and the literature over a wide range of tissues); (ii) cis-eQTL for skin or LCLs were identified from the MuTHER consortium<sup>35</sup> (with variants considered eQTLs if association with any transcript within 1Mb was  $p < 7 \times 10^{-4}$ , corresponding to a bonferroni correction for 36 loci and 2 tissues); (iii) differential expression reported for implicated genes between uninvolved skin from cases and skin from controls<sup>65</sup> and between lesional and non-lesional skin in atopic dermatitis patients in a study deposited in the Gene Expression Omnibus (Accession=GDS4444)<sup>66</sup>; and (iv) mouse mutants of implicated genes were examined in the MGI database.

Colocalization of atopic dermatitis GWAS signals and eQTLs in the MuTHER data was investigated using the R package coloc<sup>67</sup>. All SNPs within 100kb of the lead atopic dermatitis SNP were included in the analysis and we report the posterior probabilities that the two signals colocalize in Supplementary Table 19.

To identify and visualize cell types implicated in atopic dermatitis pathogenesis, the tendency of disease associated loci to fall in cell-type specific regulatory DNase Hypersensitive Sites (DHS) (a proxy for accessible and/or regulatory DNA) was calculated for the full range of p-values, essentially as done by Maurano *et al.*<sup>68</sup>. This enrichment was computed for 168 cell types and cell lines in the ENCODE Roadmap repository<sup>36</sup>. Duplicates and directly redundant cell types were removed before analysis. One-sided p-values for enrichment were calculated from an empirical null distribution of loci overlap for DHS-regions, generated by 10,000 random permutations of overlapping an identical number of random loci as found at  $p \leq 1 \times 10^{-10}$  with all DHS-regions for all cell- and tissue types.

## Variance in liability explained

We estimated the proportion of variance in atopic dermatitis liability explained by the established and novel variants in a subset of studies that had clinically diagnosed cases (GENEVA/KORAF4/POPGEN, NCRC-ADC, GENUFADex-SHIP1, GENUFAD-SHIP2, GENEVA(replication), CECCS) using the method of So *et al.* (2011)<sup>69</sup>.

## Data access.

Genome-wide results are available on request to the corresponding author, on condition of signing any Data Transfer Agreements required according the IRB-approved protocols of contributing studies.

## Methods-only URLs

Gene Expression Omnibus [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/profiles](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/profiles)  
MGI database [www.informatics.jax.org](http://www.informatics.jax.org)

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#### Competing interests statement

C.T, D.A.H, and J.Y.T. are employees of and own stock or stock options in 23andMe, Inc.

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