**Glossary**

**Acaride (or acarid)**Mites of the order of Acarina

**Achromic fissuring**Colourless cracks in the skin

**Acne**
A disorder of the skin caused by inflammation of the skin glands and hair follicles; found chiefly in adolescents and marked by pimples especially on the face

**Acne vulgaris**
A chronic acne involving mainly the face, chest, and shoulders that is common in adolescent humans and is characterised by the intermittent formation of discrete papular or pustular lesions often resulting in considerable scarring

**Acneiform papule**A small bump on the skin resembling those seen in acne, which is not a blackhead or whitehead and which does not contain pus

**Acrodermatitis continua of Hallopeau**Nail disease partly resembling nail psoriasis

**Acropustulosis keratotica**Nail disease partly resembling nail psoriasis

**Acute**
Depicting a severe but short-lived disease (or episodes of a disease) of swift onset

**Actinic keratosis**
A scaly lesion, pre-cancerous to squamous cell carcinoma, occurring on the sun-exposed skin of the face or hands, particularly among older fair-skinned individuals

**Aetiology**The science of what causes disease

**Alopecia**
Absence of hair from areas where it is normally present

**Alopecia areata**
Loss of hair with no scarring to the affected area

**Alopecia celsi**
An old term for alopecia areata still occasionally used

**Androgenic**
Associated with an androgen (male hormone) dependency

**Anosmia**
Loss of sense of smell

**Antimycobacterials**Antibiotic drugs that are active against mycobacteria

**Apthous ulcers**
The commonest type of mouth ulcers

**Atopic**
Inherited tendency to develop allergic reactions

**Atopic march**The atopic march refers to the natural history of allergic or atopic manifestations characterised by a typical sequence of clinical symptoms and conditions appearing during a certain age period and persisting over a number of years (Weinberg, EG. Current Allergy & Clinical Immunology, March 2005 Vol 18, No. 1)

**Atrophy**
Thinning (of the skin)

**Autoimmune disease**
A condition that occurs when the immune system?s antibodies or T cells attack and damages healthy body tissue

**Autosomal**
A non-sex chromosome. It is an ordinarily paired type of chromosome that is the same in both sexes of a species

**Besnier's prurigo**
Atopic eczema

**Bullous Eruptions**
Sudden appearance of blisters on the skin

**Café au lait macules**
Coffee coloured spots or patches that become apparent in early life

**Causation pathway**
Known contributory causes

**Chilblain**
Redness, itching, and burning of the skin, especially the fingers, toes, heels, nose, and ears on exposure to extreme cold and high humidity. Skin lesions may become blistered and or ulcerated

**Chondrodysplasia punctata**
A hereditary disorder in infants and young children which causes stunted growth due to a skeletal abnormality

**Chronic**
Depicting a frequently-recurring disease of slow progression and long duration

**Closed comedone**
'Whitehead' ie a blocked pore with its opening not visible

**Cobblestoning**Changes in skin texture that give the appearance of cobblestones

**Collodion baby**
A newborn baby with a tight, shiny skin that can be present due to various ichthyoses

**Comedone**
Blocked pore

**Corticosteroids**
Synthetic glucocorticoids (similar to hormones) used to treat atopic eczema among other diseases to suppress inflammation, allergy and immune responses

**Cradle cap**
A form of seborrheic dermatitis of the scalp in infants that is characterised by flaky or scaly skin which may be reddened. May involve the skin on the nose, eyebrows, scalp, ears, and skin of the trunk (in skin folds)

**Cryotherapy**
The use of cold as a surgical treatment, commonly with either carbon dioxide snow or liquid nitrogen

**Curettage and cautery**Where tumour is scraped off and the wound sealed with a small electrical current to stop bleeding and destroy remaining cancer cells

**Cutaneous**
Relating to the skin

**Dandruff**
Dried skin that flakes free from the scalp

**Decoction**
The liquid resulting from boiling a substance in water to extract the essence, e.g. herb tea

**Dermatitis**
Itchy skin condition characterised by ill-defined red patches

**Dermatology**
Medical speciality concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases

**Dermatomyositis**
Weakness and inflammation of muscles associated with a purplish skin rash

**Dermatophyte**
A fungus that can infect dead skin and nails

**Dermatoses**
A skin disease or a wound on the skin

**Desquamation**
Peeling/scaling of the skin

**Diathesis**A greater predisposition to particular diseases

**Distal portion of the nail**
Mid area of the nail (as opposed to proximal which refers to the nail bed)

**Dyschromia**
Any abnormality in the pigmentation of the skin

**Dyshidrotic**
Abnormally wet or dry

**Dysplasia**
Abnormal tissue development

**Dystrophic**
Disordered growth

**Ectodermic dysplasia**
An inherited disorder characterised by defective hair and nails and a coarsening of the skin of the palms and the soles

**Eczema**
Itchy skin condition characterised by ill-defined red patches

**Emollients**
Skin moisturisers used in the management of many dry skin problems including atopic eczema

**Epidermis**
The outer layer of the skin

**Epidermolysis bullosa**
A group of inherited conditions where blistering occurs on minimal trauma

**Epithelium**
The cellular layer that forms the epidermis of the skin and lines the hollow organs and all passages of the respiratory, alimentary, and genitourinary systems

**Erosion**
Partial loss of the top layer of the skin (epidermis), resulting in a red, moist appearance

**Erysipelas**
An acute infection of the skin caused by the bacteria Streptococcus pyogenes, characterised by redness, pain, swelling, and fever

**Erythema**
Redness of the skin caused by increased blood flow; may be localised or generalised

**Erythematous**
Redness of the skin, usually due to dilation of the small blood vessels from inflammation

**Excoriation**
The loss of skin through scratching

**Expression (as of retinoid receptors)**
Production of receptors on the cell wall

**Exocytosis**
Benign bony outgrowth, usually from the big toe

**Extracellular**
Occurring outside a cell

**Ferritin**
Iron-containing proteins that are widely distributed in animals, plants, and microorganisms. Their major function is to store iron in a nontoxic bioavailable form. Each ferritin molecule consists of ferric iron in a hollow protein shell (Apoferritins) made of 24 subunits of various sequences depending on the species and tissue types

**Fitzpatrick Skin Types**
A scale of skin types:

Type I: Extremely fair skin, always burns, and never tans.
Type II: Fair skin, always burns, and tans minimally.
Type III: Medium skin, burns moderately, tans gradually to light brown.
Type IV: Olive skin, burns minimally, always tans to moderately brown.
Type V: Dark brown skin, rarely burns, and tans profusely to dark.
Type VI: Deeply pigmented dark brown to black skin that never burns.

This definition is taken from a PDF published on the Richard David Kann Melanoma Foundation website: <http://www.melanomafoundation.com/pdf/Skin%20Types.pdf>

**Flexural involvement**
Involving the creases of the skin; for example, backs of knees, crooks of arms

**Focal hyperhidrosis**
Excessive sweating confined to areas such as armpits or palms / soles

**Follicular plugging**
Blocked and enlarged openings to hair follicles

**Folliculitis**
Inflamation of hair follicles

**Freckles**
Light brown macules that darken in the sun

**Fungus**
Simple organism, fungi include yeasts and moulds

**Generic dermatology quality of life scales**Practical questionnaires looking at the impact of skin disease and treatment on patients' lives

**Global eczema severity**
Score assessing the overall severity of eczema

**Granuloma annulare**
A benign chronic rash of unknown cause characterised by one or more flat spreading ringlike spots with lighter centers especially on the feet, legs, hands, or fingers

**Hanifin and Rajka diagnostic criteria**
A long list of features, based on patient's history, family history and the appearance of the skin rash, used as a guide when diagnosing atopic eczema

**Hepatoxic**
Chemical-driven liver damage

**Herpes zoster**
Shingles

**Humoral immunity**
That kind of immunity which is conveyed through antibodies

**Hyperhidrosis**
Excessive sweating

**Hyperkeratosis**
Thickening of the skin

**Hyperpigmentation**
Excess pigmentation in a bodily part or tissue

**Hypertrichosis**Excessive hairiness of all or part of the body

**Hypopigmentation**
Low pigmentation

**Hypertrophic**
Thickened

**Hypertrophic scar**An elevated scar resembling a keloid but which does not spread into surrounding tissues, is rarely painful, and regresses spontaneously

**Ichthyosis**
Inherited disorder of the outer, horny layer of the skin, causing the skin to become dry and scaly

**Immunological**
Relating to the immune system and matters linked to the body’s resistance mechanisms

**Immunomodulators**
Agents used to stimulate the immune system and work on eradicating the tumour

**Induration**
Thickening of the skin

**Interdigital**
Between the toes or fingers

**Keloid**
An excessive proliferation of connective tissue in response to a skin trauma and differs from a hypertrophic scar because it extends beyond the limit of the original injury

**Keratin**
A protein that is found in hair, nails and the outer layer of the skin

**Keratinization**
The process by which the skin produces the outermost horny layer

**Keratinocytes**
The cells that make up most of the epidermis (the outermost layer of the skin) and produce keratin

**Koebner phenomenon**
Lesions appearing on lines of trauma or other triggers

**Lamellar**
Retained keratin in large brown scales that lift at the periphery

**Lesion (skin)**
An area of disease on the skin (usually small)

**Lichenification**
Chronic thickening of the skin (epidermis)

**Ludwig scale**
The progression of female pattern baldness is generally classified on the Ludwig scale, which ranges from stages I to III

**Lunula**
Nail moon

**Lymphomas**
Cancer originating from the immune system

**Macule**
A flat mark which may be inflamed (red) or pigmented eg a freckle

**Mastocytosis**
An accumulation of mast cells or mastocytes in various organs

**Melanoma**
A potentially serious form of skin cancer caused by an overgrowth of the pigment cells commonly found in the skin

**Melanocytes**
The cells in the skin which give rise to skin colour

**Metaplasia**
Metaplasia is a condition where one type of cell transforms into another type of cell, because of a changed environment

**Metastatic**
A word to describe a disease which spreads to other parts of the body

**Milia**Whiteheads, small white cysts just under the epidermis

**Modalities**
Treatments

**Mohs micrographic surgery**
The removal of a tumour, layer by layer, until it has gone as determined histologically

**Moles**
A general term usually used to denote harmless collections of pigment cells in the skin. They may be present at birth, or they may develop in the first few decades of life

**Morphological alteration**
Affecting the form and structure

**Mycobacterium**
A group of bacteria which cause a range of infections in humans including TB

**Nail dystrophy**Destruction of the nail plate

**Neurodermatitis**
Atopic eczema, sometimes used to denote a form of eczema with a 'nervous' or habit induced component

**Nodule**
A deep skin lump

**Nummular**
Circular

**Oedema**
Swelling

**Onycholysis**
The loosening of the nails, beginning at the border

**Onychomadesis**
Loosening of the nail from the nail bed

**Onychomycosis**
A fungal infection of the nails

**Onychorrhexis**
Longitudinal ridging and splitting of the nails

**Open comedone**
Blackhead, i.e. a blocked pore with its opening visible

**Ophiasis**
A form of alopecia areata in which the loss of hair occurs in bands along the scalp margin partially or completely encircling the head

**Papule**
A 'pimple' which sticks out from the skin, a raised spot

**Parakeratosis**
An abnormality of the horny layer of the skin resulting in a disturbance in the process of keratinisation/converting into keratin

**Parakeratotic foci**
Parts of the horny layer of the upper skin in which cells still contain nuclei

**Parakeratosis pustulosa**
Nail disease partly resembling nail psoriasis

**Paronychia**
Inflammation involving the folds of tissue surrounding the nail

**Perilesional**
Occurring around a lesion (or white patch in the case of vitiligo)

**Perinuclear vacuolization**
A fluid-filled space within the cytoplasm of the cell surrounding the nucleus

**Periungal**
Occurring around the nail

**Photodynamic therapy**
The application of a cream to induce photo damage to a tumour using varying light sources

**Phototoxicity**
An adverse reaction to ultraviolet light or sunlight caused by medication or chemicals

**Pigmented**
Coloured

**Pilar keratosis**Rough bumps around hair follicles, most commonly on the back and outer side of the upper arms

**Pilosebaceous**
Relating to the hair follicles and sebaceous glands

**Plantar**
Relating to the sole of the foot

**Plaque**
A patch of abnormal skin, more than one cm in diameter, which feels different from the rest of the skin

**Podiatry**
The study and care of the foot

**Polygenic**
Inheritance of quantitative traits or polygenic inheritance refers to the inheritance of a phenotypic characteristic that varies in degree and can be attributed to the interactions between two or more genes and their environment. Though not necessarily genes themselves, quantitative trait loci (QTLs) are stretches of DNA that are closely linked to the genes that underlie the trait in question. QTLs can be molecularly identified (for example, with PCR or AFLP) to help map regions of the genome that contain genes involved in specifying a quantitative trait

**Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN)**
Pain occurring after herpes zoster

**Prevalence**The proportion of a population having a particular condition or characteristic: e.g. the percentage of people in a city with a particular disease, or who smoke

**Prolactin**
Prolactin (PRL) or Luteotropic hormone (LTH) is a peptide hormone primarily associated with lactation. In breastfeeding, the act of an infant suckling the nipple stimulates the production of prolactin, which fills the breast with milk via a process called lactogenesis, in preparation for the next feed. Oxytocin, another hormone, is also released, which triggers milk let-down

**Pruritus**
Itching

**Psoriasis**
A common skin condition characterised by persistent localised scaly pink patches on the elbows, knees, and scalp

**Pustules**
Pus-filled spots

**Reductase**
A reductase is an enzyme which lowers the activation energy for a reduction reaction

**Refractory to treatment**
Does not respond (well) to treatment

**Reticular**
Lacy

**Rosacea**
Chronic inflammatory skin condition characterised by redness and spots on the nose, cheeks, chin, and forehead

**Salmon patches**A dyschromia/discolouration of the nails resembling an oil patch

**Scabies**
Contagious itch or mange especially with exudative crusts (exuding pus) that is caused by parasitic mites and especially by a mite of the genus Sarcoptes (S. scabiei)

**Skin cancer**
A general term usually used to denote the three types of growths in the skin. The commonest type is basal cell carcinoma, or rodent ulcer, followed by squamous cell carcinoma and finally by the much rarer melanoma. Basal cell carcinoma doesn't spread and virtually never kills people. Squamous cell carcinoma can occasionally spread to lymph nodes and other organs. Melanoma if caught early is curable, but if it has spread deep down into the skin and blood stream, it can spread to other organs of the body like other cancers

**Striae**Stretch marks

**Subcutaneous**
Beneath the skin

**Sublingual**
Beneath the tongue

**Subungal hyperkeratosis**
A horny (eg wart) growth beneath the nail

**Telangiectasia**
Dilated capillaries

**Teratogenicity**
Developmental abnormalities in the foetus

**Terminal hair**
Thicker, longer, and pigmented hair

**Tinea capitis**A fungal infection of the scalp, also known as 'ringworm'

**Tinea pedis**Athlete's foot - a common fungal infection of the feet

**Topical dermatological treatment**
A treatment which is applied directly to the skin eg creams and ointments

**Ulcer**
Complete loss of the top layer of the skin (epidermis)

**Urticaria**
Hives

**Vasculitis**
Inflammation of small & medium-sized blood vessels - may be confined to the skin but may involve joints

**Vehicle**
A substance in which the active ingredient is dispersed. This determines the rate at which the active ingredient is absorbed through the skin

**Vesicle**
Very small blister containing clear fluid

**Vesiculation**
Formation of blisters, blistering

**Vitiligo**
A condition whereby the skin loses its pigmentation in patches

**Warts**
Horny projection on the skin usually of the extremities produced by proliferation of the skin papillae and caused by any of numerous genotypes of the human papillomavirus. Specific types include flat wart, genital wart, plantar wart, and verruca vulgaris

**Xerosis**
Dryness (of the skin)