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18th Annual Child Health Research Days  
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**ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM**

## CHR D 2022: Abstract & Poster Submission Form

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**Presenter Status**

- Undergraduate Students
- Masters Student
- PhD Student
- Post-Doctoral Fellows
- Residents
- Non-Trainee

**Research Category**

- Basic Science
- Clinical
- Community Health / Policy

**Role in the project**

- Design
- Perform Experiments
- Analyze Data
- Write Abstract

**Title**

Infantile atopic dermatitis and mother-infant bonding: A mixed methods study

**Background**

Infantile atopic dermatitis is a common condition that causes patches of dry, itchy, and sometimes cracked skin. Research suggests that the condition has a negative impact on the quality of life of children and their parents due to its impact on sleep and the need for daily baths and moisturizing. However, it is not clear whether the condition affects the parent-child bond.

### Objective

Consequently, the current study aims to investigate the relationship between atopic dermatitis and the infant-child bond using a mixed-methods approach.

### Methods

The present study recruited mothers of infants (<19 months) with atopic dermatitis to complete the Postpartum Bonding Questionnaire and a demographics measure. Mothers of children without any skin conditions were also recruited to serve as a control group. Multiple regression analyses were used to examine differences in bonding between cases and controls after controlling for covariates. A subset of the cases (n=10) also completed semi-structured interviews focused on better understanding the impact of atopic dermatitis on the mother-infant bond. Transcripts from these interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis.

### Results

The final sample consisted of 33 cases and 63 controls. Participants reported an average age of 30.80 years (SD=4.36) and an average child age of 7.6 months (SD=4.20). Quantitative findings revealed scores on the impaired bonding, pathological anger, and incipient abuse subscales did not significantly differ between cases and controls. Cases did, however, report significantly lower levels of infant-directed anxiety (2.45 vs. 3.51, p=0.04). Consistent with the quantitative findings, results from the qualitative interviews suggest that the regular caregiving required to manage atopic dermatitis may actually strengthen the bond between some mothers and infants.

### Conclusion

Findings from the current study suggest that atopic dermatitis does not have a negative impact on the quality of the mother-infant bond.

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