

# Working together to support sensitive skin patients

## 60% of Canadians report having some degree of sensitive skin<sup>1</sup>

A special interest group on sensitive skin in the International Forum for the Study of Itch (IFSI) has defined sensitive skin as:<sup>1</sup>

*“A syndrome defined by the occurrence of unpleasant sensations (stinging, burning, pain, pruritus, and tingling sensations) in response to stimuli that normally should not provoke such sensations. These unpleasant sensations cannot be explained by lesions attributable to any*

*skin disease. The skin can appear normal or be accompanied by erythema. Sensitive skin can affect all body locations, especially the face.”*

Patients with sensitive skin often aren't referred to a Dermatologist until their condition becomes more serious, such as skin allergies or dermatitis. Therefore, it is often the Family Physician who first comes into contact with an individual presenting with sensitive skin issues.

If both professions worked together to identify and treat sensitive skin earlier, it would likely improve patient outcomes.

## Identifying triggers of sensitive skin



Dr. Irina Turchin, a privately practising Dermatologist in Fredericton, NB, says that when faced with a patient reporting skin irritation, she runs through a mental checklist to quickly identify potential triggers:

*“I start by ruling out skin conditions and systemic diseases (e.g., thyroid dysfunction) contributing to the sensitive skin symptoms. Then I ask about occupation, hobbies, stress levels, sleep quality, exposure to sunlight, and clothing materials. I also want to know details of their skincare routine, their shower frequency and temperature, and which cleaning products, deodorants, and laundry products they use. I'm listening for suggestions of harsh fragrances,*

*detergents, and chemicals. It's also important to consider medications, such as lipid-lowering drugs, as potential underlying causes of sensitive skin symptoms.”*

Dr. Turchin advocates for a “lifestyle first” approach to treating sensitive skin. Identifying issues earlier, and removing risk factors and likely triggers, could be all a patient needs to avoid medication. *“The Family Physician is an important first line of defence when it comes to sensitive skin. I see so many patients taking medication for skin flare-ups who never experience improvements because they are still being exposed to irritants in their daily life. If our primary goal is to improve patient outcomes, we need to pinpoint and remove triggers before resorting to pharmacological treatment options.”*

## The power of recommendations in improving patient outcomes

Dr. Turchin has noticed that when she prescribes a specific product to patients with sensitive skin, compliance rates increase significantly. *“It's not good enough to say “try a fragrance free product” without a brand name. It requires too much effort for patients to action such a broad recommendation. Whereas, if I say, “I recommend you buy and follow Tide, Downy, and Bounce*

*Free & Gentle's 3-step laundry regimen,” they'll come back to me saying, “I use it every day and my itch has gone!” It needs to become part of their everyday routine.”*

How can you more confidently recommend specific products for sensitive skin patients? A key factor that has played a role in the **#1 Dermatologist recommended** laundry products has been the science behind these products:



## Three-step process:

### Step 1 - Clean

- Tide Free & Gentle's lift and block cleaning action cleans to the fibre level and prevents soils from redepositing



### Step 2 - Protect

- Downy Free & Gentle may provide sensitive skin benefits, such as reducing friction between clothes and skin



### Step 3 - Enhance

- Bounce Free & Gentle provides an anti-static treatment that has been shown to repel pet hair



*“Being able to provide a strong, clear rationale to patients when recommending the Free & Gentle products has helped improve patient compliance and outcomes significantly,”* says Dr. Turchin.

**When you see sensitive skin patients, take a “lifestyle first” approach, identifying and removing triggers as best you can. Wherever possible, recommend specific products to improve patient outcomes, supported by an easy-to-understand scientific rationale, such as that of Tide, Downy, and Bounce Free & Gentle's 3-step laundry regimen.**

## #1 Dermatologist Recommended

TIDE AND DOWNY FREE & GENTLE  
RECOGNIZED BY ESC\* AND NPF†:



THE ONLY LAUNDRY REGIMEN  
APPROVED BY:



Reference: 1. Farage MA. The Prevalence of Sensitive Skin. Front Med. 2019;6. doi:10.3389/fmed.2019.00098

\*Tide Free & Gentle liquid detergent, Tide PODS Free & Gentle detergent, Tide + Downy Free & Gentle liquid detergent, Tide + Downy PODS Free & Gentle detergent, Downy Free & Gentle liquid fabric conditioner, Tide Free & Gentle Hygienic Clean Heavy Duty liquid detergent, and Tide PODS Free & Gentle Hygienic Clean Heavy Duty detergent have all earned the Eczema Society of Canada Seal of Acceptance.

†Earned National Psoriasis Foundation Seal of Recognition, excluding Bounce Free & Gentle dryer sheets.