Dermatitis and Fingerprint Failure

Though dry hands may seem more a niggling health nuisance than a concern for national security, researchers at UCSI University in Kuala Lumpur now have reason to believe otherwise. A study examining 100 patients with hand dermatitis reported that these individuals were four times more likely to fail computerised fingerprint verification tests than their non-dermatitis afflicted counterparts. Cracked and swollen skin can mar the crevice pattern of fingerprints unique to individuals, which are crucial for MyKad use, bank security clearance and a host of other daily activities. The study’s lead author Dr Lee Chew Kek was quoted, “This can have serious adverse effects on the economy, jobs and security”. Given the increased reliance of biometrics in public and private settings nationwide, treating acute and chronic cases of hand dermatitis is an issue worthy of further investigation. – Reuters.