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Psychopathology and Suicide Risk in Patients Suffering From Psoriasis and Other Dermatological Diseases

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Introduction: Psoriasis has a significant impact on the mental and emotional functioning. It has been shown that the risk of psychiatric comorbidity as well as suicide risk increases with the severity of the disease.

Objectives: To analyze the association between psoriasis, mental disorders and suicidal ideation in a sample of patients affected by psoriasis.

Aims: To analyze the differences between patients affected by psoriasis and patients with other dermatologic diseases.

Methods: we enrolled 157 consecutive patients (90 women and 67 men), mean age 50,15 years ($\pm 16,21$); 91 affected by psoriasis (58.0 %), 35 by melanoma (22.3 %) and 31 with atopic dermatitis (19.7%). All participants completed a structured sociodemographic interview. We also administered the following rating scale: Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM- D) and the Hamilton Rating Scale for Anxiety (HAM -A). We assessed current and prior suicidal ideation and the number of previous suicide attempts.

Results: Patients with psoriasis, more frequently had a comorbid psychiatric disorder (38.5% vs 16.7 %, $p < 0.05$), and reported more frequently previous suicidal ideation (37.4% vs 16.7%) and history of one or more suicide attempts (6.6% vs 0.0%, $p < 0.05$). Moreover, patients with psoriasis, have higher scores on the HAM -D ($T155 = 3.09$, $p < 0.01$). The duration of illness of more than 8 years ($\beta = 1.51$, $p < 0.001$) was the only factor independently associated with psoriasis.

Conclusions: The clinical evaluation of patients with psoriasis should include the assessment of psychiatric comorbidities and the routine assessment of suicide risk.