

IN THIS ISSUE...

New Insights on Psoriasis

The chronic nature of psoriasis and the fact that there is no cure available for the 2–3% of the population currently affected necessitate new treatment options and studies on illness perception. In this issue of Acta Dermato-Venereologica, two articles touch on this subject.

Piaserico et al. (p. 293–297) focus on elderly psoriasis patients. There are several concerns when treating a patient with an inflammatory disease, e.g. the impairment of the immune system with age and the potential risk of drug interaction since elderly often take several drugs. Piaserico et al. compared the effect of traditional drugs with biological drugs in 187 patients with psoriasis >65 years of age. Generally, the use of systemic traditional drugs was well tolerated among patients despite having at least one comorbidity. However, cyclosporine had the highest rate of adverse effects and the authors conclude that this treatment should be used cautiously in elderly patients. Overall, biological drugs were more effective than traditional drugs and all biologics showed a PASI 75 score of 60% or higher after 12 weeks of therapy.

In contrast, the study by Wahl et al. (p. 271–275) describes illness perception and subjective health in psoriatic patients. Previous studies have shown that practitioners lack understanding with the effects of psoriasis and fail to manage the long-term aspects of psoriasis. In this study, the authors found that patient beliefs regarding aspects such as chronicity, control and consequences of psoriasis correlated with greater disease severity. In addition, those who experienced more anxiety about psoriasis had a poorer quality of life. Previous studies have shown that illness perception is an important factor affecting the subjective well-being of a patient. It has also been associated with self-care behaviours. Wahl et al. suggest that patients with a greater risk of coping poorly with their illness may be helped by tailored interventions to modify their personal model of illness.

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