

GENERAL PSYCHOPATHOLOGY, STRESS, SELF-ESTEEM, ALEXITHYMIA AND TRAUMA RELATIONSHIP IN PATIENTS WITH PSORIASIS AND NEURODERMATITIS

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: This study aimed to investigate the levels of general psychopathology, perceived stress, self-esteem, alexithymia and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in patients with psoriasis and neurodermatitis, and to determine how these psychosocial factors affect the course of chronic dermatological diseases. Chronic skin disorders, characterized by periods of remission and exacerbation, adversely affect not only the physical health of patients but also their social, emotional and psychological well-being.

METHODS: The study was conducted with 32 psoriasis, 32 neurodermatitis patients and 32 healthy controls who presented at the Dermatology Outpatient Clinic of Cumhuriyet University Faculty of Medicine. Ethical approval was obtained on 18.11.2020 with decision number 2020-11/06. Each participant was informed about the study and provided with an informed consent form. Participants first completed a socio-demographic data form, followed by the administration of the SCL-90-R, the Perceived Stress Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5).

RESULTS: When the SCL-90-R subscales were compared, the prevalence of psychopathology was found to be statistically significantly higher in psoriasis and neurodermatitis patients compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$). Among psoriasis

patients, 65.6% had the highest scores on the interpersonal sensitivity subscale, followed by OCD and depression. Among neurodermatitis patients, 78.1% had the highest scores on depression and OCD subscales, followed by somatization and anger. When examining perceived stress test scores, psoriasis patients (17.96 ± 8.09) had scores similar to the control group (14.53 ± 6.56), but a significant difference was observed between neurodermatitis patients (21.06 ± 7.37) and the control group ($p = 0.002$). When analyzing RSES test scores, psoriasis patients (1.84 ± 1.13) and the control group (1.25 ± 1.27) showed similar scores, but the neurodermatitis group (2.9 ± 2.08) had significantly higher scores compared to the other groups ($p = 0.001$). When comparing TAS-20 and PCL-5 test scores, the difference was due to the control group participants, whose test scores were significantly lower than those in the other groups (TAS-20: $p = 0.001$, PCL-5: $p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS: These findings emphasize the necessity of considering not only the physical symptoms but also the psychosocial aspects in the treatment of chronic dermatological diseases.

Keywords: Alexithymia, general psychopathology, neurodermatitis, posttraumatic stress disorder, psoriasis, self-esteem