



PSYCHODERMATOLOGY

USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION IN DERMATOLOGY: A SURVEY IN A SPECIALIST TERTIARY PSYCHODERMATOLOGY CLINIC

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Introduction: Psychodermatology patients often seek help from dermatologists, as they consider their condition to be of cutaneous origin and they firmly refuse psychiatric input. First-line treatment for such disorders is psychotropics, with simultaneous skin treatment. Nevertheless, the majority of patients are reluctant to commence on such medication as they consider it irrelevant or they are afraid of adverse events.

Objective: To determine how well patients are informed about their psychotropic medication and whether further help is required in order to achieve higher levels of treatment adherence and finally better patient care.

Materials and Methods: All consecutive patients seen in one day in our psychodermatology clinic, who were already on psychotropic medication, were included in our survey.

Results: Out of 31 patients, only 17 consented to take part. Commonest disorder among patients was delusional infestation/Morgellons (53%), followed by rosacea, body dysmorphic disorder and/or depression. Most commonly psychotropic medications prescribed were citalopram(29.4%), risperidone(23.5%), amitriptyline (23.5%) and quetiapine(23.5%). 53% of patients, on a linear analogue scale from 0(no) to 10(very well), marked the scale from 8-10 about how well they were informed about their medication by their treating physician/ prescriber. On the other hand, 47% of patients reported that they had no information from the pharmacy. 58.8% of patients were aware of the side effects of their medication, while 29.4% reported that they are not aware about whom to contact in case they have queries. More than half of patients (58.8%) believe that a leaflet about medication would be very helpful.

Conclusions: Patients seem to be happy about the information provided by their treating physician/prescriber, but there was insufficient or even contradictory counselling by pharmacy. Further larger surveys are required about the attitude of patients towards





treatment and further interventions would be potentially helpful to increase awareness and finally adherence to treatment.

