

P-874 - THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF ALOPECIA AREATA: A CASE-CONTROL STUDY OF 50 PATIENTS

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Introduction: Alopecia areata is a frequently encountered hair disorder characterized by the rapid hair loss, usually from the scalp. It has few physically harmful effects, but may lead to psychological consequences, including high levels of anxiety and depression.

Aim: This case-control study was undertaken to determine the psychiatric morbidity among patients with alopecia areata.

Methods: The study included 50 patients diagnosed with alopecia areata and 50 age-sex matched individuals selected from a general population without any hair loss (control group). For evaluating psychological distress, we used Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). Severity of the disease was evaluated by Severity of Alopecia Tool (SALT).

Results: Patient's mean age was 32.92 years. Fifty-two percent of patients were females. Patients were single in 52% of cases, divorced in 2% of cases and married in 46% of cases. Depression and anxiety were detected respectively in 38% and 62% of patients. There was statistically significant difference between the patients and control group in terms of depression ($p=0.047$) and anxiety ($p=0.005$). Depression was statistically higher in women with alopecia areata ($p=0.016$). Disease severity was higher in psychiatric morbidity cases.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicate that alopecia areata is associated with psychiatric morbidity. Dermatologists should be aware of the psychological impact of alopecia areata, especially as current treatments have limited effectiveness.