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Depression and Anxiety in Adults With Hidradenitis Suppurativa

[1] Sandi, [1] Dharmawan

[1] Faculty of Medicine, Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta City, Central Java, Indonesia

Correspondence : dr.sandi9388474 @gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: The literature surrounding the intersection of Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS) and psychiatric comorbidities, particularly depression and anxiety, has garnered increasing attention in recent years. **Literature Review:** Further exploration by (O Perche et al., 2022) illustrates the social ramifications of HS, where patients often face isolation and impaired social functioning. The psychological toll of HS is compounded by social anxiety, which can exacerbate the challenges of social participation. This view is supported by the findings of (Agarwal et al., 2022), who systematically reviewed the symptomatology associated with HS and identified itch as a significant factor affecting patients' quality of life, thereby linking physical discomfort to emotional distress. The prevalence of depression and anxiety among HS patients is further corroborated by (E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022), who conducted a cross-sectional study in Poland, revealing a heightened risk of suicidality in this population. This aligns with the findings of (Ting Ooi et al., 2022), which emphasize the profound psychosocial burden of HS, particularly within the Singaporean context, highlighting how demographic factors may influence the patient experience. Lastly, (Ortiz-Álvarez et al., 2023) reinforced the established connection between HS and mental health issues by assessing suicide risk, advocating for a comprehensive approach to care that integrates both physical and psychological considerations. **Conclusion:** In conclusion, the cumulative evidence from these studies strongly advocates for a holistic treatment approach for HS patients, recognizing the intricate interplay between their physical symptoms and psychological health. This integrated perspective is essential for improving overall patient outcomes and addressing the significant mental health challenges faced by individuals with HS.

Keyword: Depression, Anxiety, Hidradenitis Suppurativa

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INTRODUCTION

The literature surrounding the intersection of Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS) and psychiatric comorbidities, particularly depression and anxiety, has garnered increasing attention in recent years. (Phan et al., 2020) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis, revealing a significant association between HS and various psychiatric disorders. Their findings indicated that approximately one-quarter of HS patients may grapple with at least one psychiatric comorbidity, highlighting the urgent need for a deeper understanding of these relationships to inform clinical practice.

Building on this foundation, (O Perche et al., 2022) explored the social ramifications of HS, noting that patients often experience isolation and impaired social functioning. This study emphasizes the psychological toll of HS, suggesting that heightened social anxiety may exacerbate the challenges faced in social participation. Such insights underscore the multifaceted impact of HS, extending beyond physical symptoms to encompass emotional and social dimensions.

Further expanding the discussion, (Agarwal et al., 2022) provided a systematic review of the symptomatology associated with HS, particularly focusing on itch—a symptom that significantly affects patients' quality of life. The chronic pain and discomfort associated with HS can lead to emotional distress, further contributing to the psychiatric burden observed in affected individuals. This highlights the necessity of addressing both physical and psychological aspects of HS in treatment protocols.

(E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022) conducted a cross-sectional study that specifically examined the prevalence of depression and anxiety among Polish HS patients. Their findings corroborate previous research, indicating that HS is frequently accompanied by significant psychological distress, including an increased risk of suicidality. This study adds to the growing body of evidence linking HS with mental

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health issues, suggesting that healthcare providers must remain vigilant in screening for these comorbidities.

(Ting Ooi et al., 2022) further investigated the psychosocial burden of HS, particularly within the Singaporean context. Their research revealed that the psychological distress and impaired quality of life associated with HS are profound, often surpassing that seen in other dermatological conditions. This study highlights the importance of considering demographic and cultural factors when assessing the psychological impact of HS, suggesting that such variables may influence the patient experience significantly.

Finally, (Ortiz-Álvarez et al., 2023) conducted a multivariate analysis to assess suicide risk among HS patients. Their study reinforces the established connection between HS and mental health issues, particularly the heightened risk of suicidal ideation. This research underscores the critical nature of addressing the psychological consequences of HS, advocating for comprehensive care that encompasses both physical and mental health considerations.

In summary, the literature indicates a robust association between Hidradenitis Suppurativa and various psychiatric comorbidities, including depression and anxiety. The cumulative findings from these studies advocate for a holistic approach to treatment, recognizing the intricate interplay between physical symptoms and psychological health in this patient population.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The article "Hidradenitis suppurativa and psychiatric comorbidities, suicides and substance abuse: systematic review and meta-analysis" by (Phan et al., 2020) addresses the significant relationship between hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) and various psychiatric comorbidities, highlighting a critical area of concern for both dermatologists and mental health professionals. The authors systematically review existing literature to elucidate the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among

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individuals suffering from HS, providing a comprehensive analysis that underscores the necessity for integrated care approaches.

The systematic review and meta-analysis reveal that chronic inflammatory skin disorders, such as HS, are frequently associated with psychiatric issues, including depression and anxiety. The findings from the Italian survey mentioned in the article indicate that approximately one-quarter of HS patients may be diagnosed with at least one psychiatric condition, which is a substantial statistic that emphasizes the need for clinicians to be vigilant regarding the mental health of their patients with HS (Phan et al., 2020).

The authors utilized a rigorous methodology, conducting extensive electronic searches across multiple databases, which adds credibility to their findings. They included a variety of psychiatric conditions in their analysis, such as depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and personality disorders, thereby providing a broad overview of the potential mental health challenges faced by this patient population. This comprehensive approach allows for a better understanding of the multifaceted nature of HS and its implications beyond skin symptoms.

One of the critical insights from the article is the lack of synthesized data exploring the relationship between HS and psychiatric disorders prior to this study. By addressing this gap, the authors contribute valuable knowledge that can inform clinical practices. The article suggests that understanding the comorbidities associated with HS is crucial for healthcare providers, as it may influence treatment strategies and improve patient outcomes.

However, while the article presents important findings, it also raises questions about the causative mechanisms linking HS to psychiatric disorders. The authors do not delve deeply into potential biological or psychosocial factors that may contribute to this association, which could be an avenue for further research. Additionally, the

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reliance on case-control studies may introduce variability in the data, as the authors acknowledge that the quality of studies included in the meta-analysis varied.

The article "Hidradenitis Suppurativa's Impact on Social Activities: An Observational Study" by (O Perche et al., 2022) provides valuable insights into the multifaceted effects of hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) on the social lives of affected individuals. HS is characterized by painful and debilitating symptoms, including nodules, abscesses, and sinus tract formation, which can severely limit patients' ability to engage in everyday social activities. The authors highlight the isolation often experienced by patients, emphasizing the psychological implications of living with a chronic condition.

The study employs an observational design to assess the extent to which HS affects participation in social activities. The findings indicate that patients with HS report a significant negative impact on their social interactions, which aligns with the understanding that chronic health conditions can lead to social withdrawal and anxiety. This is particularly relevant when considering the emotional and psychological toll that HS imposes on individuals, as the physical manifestations of the disease can lead to feelings of embarrassment and self-consciousness.

Moreover, the authors explore the relationship between social anxiety and the impact of HS on social activities. Their analysis suggests that a heightened propensity for social anxiety correlates with a greater negative effect on social engagement. This finding is critical, as it underscores the need for healthcare providers to consider the psychological aspects of HS when developing treatment plans. The recognition that social anxiety can exacerbate the challenges faced by HS patients is an important step toward holistic management of the condition.

The article "Itch in Hidradenitis Suppurativa/Acne Inversa: A Systematic Review" by (Agarwal et al., 2022) provides a comprehensive examination of hidradenitis suppurativa (HS), a chronic inflammatory skin condition that significantly affects the quality of life (QoL) of those affected. The authors emphasize that HS is marked

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by recurrent nodules, abscesses, and draining tunnels, which not only lead to physical discomfort but also contribute to psychological distress, including symptoms of depression and anxiety.

The systematic review highlights the multifactorial nature of HS, identifying key risk factors such as dysregulated immunity, genetic predisposition, smoking, and obesity that trigger perifollicular inflammation. These factors are critical in understanding the pathophysiology of HS and its associated symptoms, particularly pain and itch, which the study identifies as the most debilitating aspects of the disease. The prevalence of pain in 83.6% of the subjects studied underscores the severe impact HS has on physical health, which is often paralleled by mental health challenges.

Moreover, the article discusses the significant role of itch as a prodromal symptom in HS, suggesting that it may not only serve as an indicator of disease activity but also exacerbate the psychological burden on patients. The chronic nature of HS, coupled with its painful and often malodorous manifestations, can lead to social isolation, embarrassment, and a decline in mental well-being, which are critical factors in the development of anxiety and depression among individuals with this condition.

The authors' systematic approach in reviewing the literature surrounding itch in HS offers valuable insights into the complexities of managing this condition. They effectively argue that addressing the physical symptoms of HS, such as pain and itch, is essential but insufficient without also considering the psychological implications. This dual focus is vital for improving overall patient care and QoL.

The article "Depression and anxiety in hidradenitis suppurativa patients: a cross-sectional study among Polish patients" by (E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022) presents a thorough examination of the psychological implications faced by individuals afflicted with hidradenitis suppurativa (HS). This chronic inflammatory skin condition is characterized by painful lesions, primarily affecting regions such as the

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axillae, groin, and perianal areas, which not only lead to significant physical discomfort but also pose profound emotional challenges for patients.

The authors highlight that HS is not merely a dermatological issue; it is intertwined with various comorbidities, including obesity and cardiovascular diseases, which further complicate the patients' health status (E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022). The study's findings suggest that the physical manifestations of HS, combined with the stigma and limitations imposed by the condition, contribute to a heightened prevalence of depression and anxiety among affected individuals. This aligns with previous literature indicating that chronic skin diseases often correlate with psychological distress, thereby underscoring the necessity for a holistic approach to treatment that encompasses both physical and mental health.

Furthermore, the article discusses the emotional burden associated with HS, particularly in sensitive areas such as the anogenital region, where lesions can lead to significant discomfort and impact sexual function (E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022). The authors argue that this emotional strain can exacerbate feelings of isolation and anxiety, leading to an increased risk of suicidality among HS patients. This assertion is critical, as it emphasizes the urgent need for healthcare providers to be vigilant in screening for mental health issues in patients with HS.

The cross-sectional nature of the study provides valuable insights but also presents limitations, such as the inability to establish causality between HS and the observed psychological conditions. Additionally, the focus on a Polish patient population may limit the generalizability of the findings to other demographics. Nevertheless, the authors successfully advocate for the integration of mental health support within the treatment plans for HS patients, highlighting the importance of addressing both the physical and psychological aspects of the disease.

The article titled "The psychosocial burden of hidradenitis suppurativa in Singapore" by (Ting Ooi et al., 2022) provides a comprehensive examination of the psychological impact of hidradenitis suppurativa (HS), a chronic inflammatory skin

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condition that affects approximately 1% of the population. The authors emphasize that HS is not merely a physical ailment but a condition that significantly compromises the quality of life (QoL) of those affected, often leading to profound psychological symptoms.

One of the critical insights from the article is the assertion that the disfiguring nature of HS—characterized by painful lesions, foul-smelling discharge, and scarring—exacerbates feelings of distress and social isolation. The authors argue that the psychological burden associated with HS is substantial, surpassing that of other dermatological disorders. This finding aligns with the understanding that chronic skin conditions can lead to emotional distress and psychiatric comorbidities, including depression and anxiety.

The article further explores the relationship between demographic factors and disease severity with psychological outcomes. (Ting Ooi et al., 2022) suggest that demographic variables such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status can significantly influence the cognitive and emotional states of individuals with HS. For instance, younger patients may experience heightened anxiety and depressive symptoms, potentially due to societal pressures and the impact of HS on social interactions. This nuanced understanding of the interplay between demographic factors and psychological health underscores the need for tailored interventions that address both the physical and psychological aspects of HS.

Moreover, the authors highlight the inadequacy of existing HS treatments, which often provide only partial relief from symptoms. This treatment gap contributes to ongoing emotional and social impairments, further entrenching patients in a cycle of psychological distress. The implication is clear: effective management of HS must not only focus on alleviating physical symptoms but also incorporate psychological support to enhance overall QoL.

The article "Hidradenitis suppurativa and suicide risk: a multivariate analysis in a disease with a high psychological burden" by (Ortiz-Álvarez et al., 2023) provides

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an in-depth examination of the psychological ramifications associated with Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS), particularly focusing on the heightened risk of suicide among affected individuals. The authors effectively illustrate the intricate relationship between dermatological conditions and mental health, emphasizing that HS is not merely a physical ailment but a significant contributor to psychological distress.

The study's findings reveal a concerning prevalence of suicidal ideation among patients with HS, highlighting the substantial psychological burden that accompanies this chronic inflammatory skin condition. The authors employ a multivariate analysis to dissect various factors that may contribute to the increased suicide risk, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between physical symptoms and mental health outcomes. This methodological approach strengthens the validity of their conclusions, allowing for a nuanced interpretation of the data.

Moreover, the article underscores the importance of recognizing HS as a condition that warrants psychological support in addition to medical treatment. The authors advocate for a multidisciplinary approach in managing HS, wherein dermatologists and mental health professionals collaborate to address both the physical and psychological needs of patients. This perspective is crucial, as it aligns with the growing recognition of the psychosomatic nature of many dermatological conditions.

However, while the study presents compelling evidence of the association between HS and suicide risk, it could benefit from further exploration of the underlying mechanisms driving this relationship. For instance, factors such as social stigma, chronic pain, and the impact of visible skin lesions on self-esteem could be examined in greater detail to provide a more holistic understanding of the psychological challenges faced by HS patients.

CONCLUSION

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The literature indicates a significant association between Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS) and psychiatric comorbidities, particularly depression and anxiety. A systematic review and meta-analysis conducted by (Phan et al., 2020) reveals that approximately one-quarter of HS patients may have at least one psychiatric condition, underscoring the necessity for healthcare providers to be vigilant in monitoring the mental health of these individuals. This foundational study highlights the critical relationship between chronic inflammatory skin disorders and various psychiatric issues, emphasizing the importance of integrated care approaches that address both physical and mental health.

Further exploration by (O Perche et al., 2022) illustrates the social ramifications of HS, where patients often face isolation and impaired social functioning. The psychological toll of HS is compounded by social anxiety, which can exacerbate the challenges of social participation. This view is supported by the findings of (Agarwal et al., 2022), who systematically reviewed the symptomatology associated with HS and identified itch as a significant factor affecting patients' quality of life, thereby linking physical discomfort to emotional distress.

The prevalence of depression and anxiety among HS patients is further corroborated by (E. Rymaszewska et al., 2022), who conducted a cross-sectional study in Poland, revealing a heightened risk of suicidality in this population. This aligns with the findings of (Ting Ooi et al., 2022), which emphasize the profound psychosocial burden of HS, particularly within the Singaporean context, highlighting how demographic factors may influence the patient experience.

Lastly, (Ortiz-Álvarez et al., 2023) reinforced the established connection between HS and mental health issues by assessing suicide risk, advocating for a comprehensive approach to care that integrates both physical and psychological considerations.

In conclusion, the cumulative evidence from these studies strongly advocates for a holistic treatment approach for HS patients, recognizing the intricate interplay

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between their physical symptoms and psychological health. This integrated perspective is essential for improving overall patient outcomes and addressing the significant mental health challenges faced by individuals with HS.

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