

Psychological impacts of alopecia areata

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Abstract

Introduction: Alopecia areata (AA) is one of the commonest causes of non-scarring alopecia. Since hair is a vital part with very high cosmetic concern, hair loss might have significant negative impact on patient's life. Objective of this study was to investigate depression & anxiety in patients with AA.

Methods: A total of 75 consecutive patients of AA were interviewed over a year period in the dermatology outpatient department. Relevant history and examination findings were recorded in the preset pro-forma. For the assessment of depression and anxiety; Nepali version of Beck Depression Inventory and Beck Anxiety Inventory were used respectively.

Results: Among 75 patients, prevalence of depression and anxiety were 66.7% and 73.3% respectively with median depression score= 5 (IQR=0.0-10.0) and median anxiety score= 5 (IQR=0.0-11.0). Among depressed ones, 82.0% had minimal and 18.0% had moderate depression, while none of them had severe depression. Similarly, 89.0% AA patient had mild and 11.0% had moderate anxiety, while none of them had severe anxiety.

Conclusion: Anxiety and depression are common psychological problems in AA patients. Because of their direct impact on treatment outcome, we treating dermatologist must be aware of them; and we should counsel our patients for consultation with psychiatrist on time for their maximum benefit.

Biography

Suchana Marahatta expertise in dermatology with special interest in dermatosurgery, aesthetics and tropical dermatology. She currently a associate professor in the department of dermatology at B P Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Nepal. She involved in patient care, research, teaching learning activities as well as administrative activities of both undergraduate and postgraduate students. She published more than 20 articles in renowned national and international journals.

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