



HISTORY OF DERMATOLOGY

CLASSIFICATIONS OF ACANTHOSIS NIGRICANS – A REVIEW AND MODIFICATION PROPOSAL

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Introduction: Multifaceted aspects of acanthosis nigricans (AN), referring to diversity in etiology, localization, age, sex and ethnic characteristics, determine a number of difficulties in drawing up simple, established and unified classification. Existent nomenclatures are based either on etiologic or on localizational factors or on an overlapping and ambiguous combination of both. We propose a classification, including both etiologic and localizational determinants, based on most recent evidence about etiopathogenesis, morphology and epidemiology of AN and its multidimensional associations with insulin-resistant, endocrine, genetic and neoplastic abnormalities.

Objective: To review recent classifications of AN and to propose a modified one.

Results: We analyzed all five classifications of AN, covering the period of 1976 to 2018, and made some adjustments. We divided AN into two types - etiologic and localizational, each with four subtypes. Etiologic AN includes four subtypes, based on the main causes for AN: 1. Insulin-resistant; 2. Paraneoplastic; 3. Genetic (monogenic and multigenic); 4. Drug-induced. Localizational AN includes four subtypes, based on most affected areas: 1. Articular; 2. Unilateral; 3. Facial; 4. Focal.

Conclusion: Further work needs to be performed to clarify etiopathology behind insulin resistant, neoplastic and genetic disorders. That would simplify our understanding about essential causes for AN and would contribute to the preparation of clear and uniform classification.

