



PIGMENTATION

PREVALENCE AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF PATIENTS WITH HYPERPIGMENTARY DISORDERS IN DERMATOLOGY OUTPATIENT SETTING IN WEST MIDLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM

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Introduction: Melasma and Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation (PIH) are the two most common hyperpigmentary disorders. The prevalence of melasma ranges from 1.5 to 33%, but there were no prevalence studies in hyperpigmentary disorders in the United Kingdom (UK) despite rising 'non-White' population.

Objective: To understand the prevalence and demographics in melasma/PIH patients with aims to improve the clinical service provision in the UK.

Materials and Methods: A retrospective study was carried out at University Hospitals Birmingham, UK. To identify patients with melasma/PIH, clinic letters were screened by searching for the word 'melasma' or 'post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation' in their clinical electronic records over the past 5 years and the demographics and treatment data were reviewed in 767 out of 1089 patients with melasma/PIH.

Results: Out of 39,999 patients who attended general dermatology outpatient clinic, 1089 patients had melasma (n=138, 0.3%) or PIH (n=951, 2.4%). The demographics and treatment review in 767 melasma/PIH patients (M:F=1:2, median age=53.9yrs, melasma:n=97, PIH:n=670) confirmed that the hyperpigmentary disorders were more prevalent in darker skin type (Fitzpatrick skin phototype I-II (31.4%) vs. III-VI (68.6%)). 87/97 (89.7%) patients with melasma received treatments whereas 245/670 (36.6%) of PIH patients were managed conservatively. The top 3 most common inflammatory conditions leading to PIH were: Eczema, Psoriasis and Acne.

Conclusion: The prevalence of melasma was lower in our study compared with previous studies based in other countries reflecting the limited number of melasma referrals being seen in the NHS as it is being considered as a 'cosmetic problem' despite its significant





impact on their quality of life. The majority of the melasma patients received multiple treatments once referred to dermatology clinic but the management was often inconsistent amongst dermatologists. Development of guidelines will help to improve the consistency in the management of hyperpigmentation.

