



PSYCHODERMATOLOGY

POTENTIAL ETIOLOGIC FACTORS WITH ASSESMENT OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN PATIENTS WITH PRURITUS ANI

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Introduction: Pruritus ani is an unpleasant sensation which contributes to scratching of the perianal area. This is a frequent manifestation of different systemic diseases, skin disorders and rectal pathologies. When there are no identifiable structural abnormalities one must consider psychological and psychiatric disturbances as causative factors.

Objective: An intention of this study was to identify potential factors eliciting pruritus ani, including allergens, and to assess its influence on a development of anxiety and depression in patients experiencing this symptom.

Materials and Methods: Sixty patients suffering from persistent pruritus ani were enrolled to the study. An exclusion criteria was a presence of identifiable rectal structural abnormalities. Enrolled subjects were submitted to patch allergy test. Laboratory tests included: peripheral blood smear, bilirubin, aminotransferases, glucose level, urinalysis, stool ova and parasites test and bacterial smear. Patients were evaluated with psychometric tests to assess a severity of anxiety and depression. Additionally, subjects fulfilled a test for descriptive evaluation of the itch and a four-point assessment test.

Results: The study revealed following causes of pruritus ani: allergic contact dermatitis (40%), idiopathic pruritus ani (33,3%), streptococcal skin infection of the rectal area (6,7%), canidal intertrigo (5%), lichen sclerosus (3,3%). The most frequent causative allergens were topical medicaments and components of cosmetics. A sort of causative factor of pruritus ani was shown to have a significant impact on a severity of depression whereas no similar dependence was observed for anxiety. Neither intensity of the itch nor its frequency was found to correlate with depressive-anxiety symptoms.

Conclusions: Pruritus ani has a detrimental influence on psychological functioning of patients. Although anal itching is typically of moderate intensity, this significantly affects a severity of depression. Management should primarily tend to identification of causative factors what may decrease an intensity of the itch and improve a quality of life in patients.

