

URTICARIA, ANGIOEDEMA

## EPIDEMIOLOGY AND COMORBIDITIES OF PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC URTICARIA IN KOREA: A NATIONWIDE POPULATION-BASED STUDY

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**Introduction:** Few population-based studies have focused on the epidemiology and comorbidities of chronic urticaria (CU) or chronic spontaneous urticaria (CSU).

**Objectives:** The objective of this study was to obtain information on the epidemiology and comorbidities associated with CU and CSU in Korea.

**Materials and Methods:** We conducted a cross-sectional analysis using a national health insurance database. An algorithm based on the International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision, was used for the identification of patients with CU and CSU, and an age-sex adjusted logistic regression model was used to assess the risk of comorbidities in these patients.

**Results:** The average annual prevalence rates of CU and CSU during the 4-year period between 2010 and 2013 were 3.08% and 1.40%, respectively. The prevalence rates of CU and CSU were higher in women than men (1:1.39 and 1:1.34, respectively) and peaked at 0-9 and 70-79 years, respectively. After adjustment for age and sex, the patients with CU and CSU were found to have a significantly higher prevalence rate of CU/CSU-related diseases, compared with those without CU (mean adjusted odds ratio, 8.46; 95% confidence interval, 8.10-8.83). Allergic rhinitis, drug allergies, asthma, thyroid diseases and cancers were the most common comorbidities. Stomach, thyroid, liver and prostate cancers were the most prevalent cancers.

**Conclusions:** This study provides large epidemiological data on the prevalence rates of CU and CSU, and their comorbidities, in Korea. Patients with CU and CSU impose a higher burden, in terms of specific comorbidities, than those without CU.