Autistic Trait, Empathy, and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Symptoms in Women with Idiopathic Hirsutism.

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Abstract

AIM:
Many psychiatric disorders, including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), disruptive behavioral disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and some psychiatric characteristics, such as poor empathizing, are regarded to be related to elevated levels of androgens or androgen sensitivity. Thus, numerous studies have investigated the potential association between androgen-related physical diseases and these psychiatric conditions. Idiopathic hirsutism (IH) is a disease characterized by an increased sensitivity of the pilosebaceous unit to circulating androgens in women. The purpose of this study was to examine whether IH has a relationship with androgen-related psychiatric conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:
Totally 37 females with IH and 33 healthy female controls were included in this study. Childhood and present ADHD symptoms of the participants were assessed using the Wender Utah Rating Scale (WURS) and the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale, respectively. The Autism-spectrum quotient and the interpersonal reactivity index were used to assess autistic traits and different aspects of empathy. Hirsutism severity was measured using the Ferriman-Gallwey scoring system.

RESULTS:
No significant difference was found between the patients and controls on psychiatric questionnaire scores, except for a trend for subjects with IH to show higher levels of the school-associated problems than controls according to WURS. The severity of hirsutism was strongly correlated with the WURS irritability and behavioral problems/impulsivity subscores and WURS total score, and moderately correlated with the WURS attentional deficit subscore.

CONCLUSIONS:
This study provides preliminary evidence that common etiological factors may be involved in both the severity of IH, ADHD, and coexisting disruptive behavioral problems.