Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Atopic Dermatitis: An Appraisal of the Current Literature

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ABSTRACT

Atopic dermatitis (AD) is a chronic inflammatory skin disease with hallmark characteristics in terms of pruritus, psychological stress, and sleep disturbance, all possibly associated with an increased risk of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Epidemiological data indicate that AD and ADHD exhibit a parallel rise in global prevalence, and several cross-sectional studies have indicated co-occurrence of the 2 conditions. Furthermore, recent cohort studies have reported a temporal association between AD and later development of ADHD. However, underlying pathophysiological mechanisms of this association are insufficiently explored. The aim of the present review was to provide any clinician encountering AD an update on the most recent studies examining the possible AD-ADHD association. In turn, this could aid counseling of patients and parents. This review may encourage healthcare providers to refer AD patients and families to psychiatric specialists when ADHD is suspected.