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INTRODUCTION

Internet is widely used by the patients to get medical information. Studies have evaluated the number of requests and the quality of the most frequently consulted websites about hidradenitis suppurativa (HS).

We performed an observational multicentric study in ResoVerneuil network to describe the characteristics of the HS patients who consult internet, and the impact on their medical compartment. A questionnaire was filled by every patient consulting for HS, collecting sociodemographic data, informations on internet use in general and concerning HS, and eventual consequences on their health care use. The physician completed medical data about HS (age of onset, familial history, severity (Hurley staging and HS PGA), treatment) and eventual associated inflammatory disease. We report here the preliminary results.

RESULTS

- 501 patients among which 322 women, mean age 33 years. 203 consulted at hospital and 286 in private office. 22.5 % lived in rural and 74.1% in urban environment (missing data 3.25%). Highest academic degree was GCSE in 3.5%, vocational qualification in 23.25%, bachelor in 24.4%, tertiary study in 34.6%, others in 9%.
- Mean age at beginning of HS was 21.6 years, 9.5% had familial history of HS (father 3.05%, mother 6.3%, brother or sister 6.3%), 3.25% had spondyloarthritis, and 2.2% inflammatory bowel disease. Comorbidities included hypertension in 4.88%, diabetes in 4.67%, depression in 5%, dyslipidemia in 3.9%.
- Hurley stage was I in 35.9%, II in 42.3% and III in 10.4% (missing data for 11.4%). HS PGA was clear in 5.5%, minimal in 16.3%, mild in 34.9%, moderate in 29.9%, severe in 12.6% and very severe in 1%.
- 48.4% of the patients had already had antibiotics for HS, 88.6% surgery and 7.1% biologics.
- 98.2% had access to internet at home and 79.3% used it during the last year to get information about HS. During the last year 4.4% of these patients consult internet once a week, 6.7% at least once a month, 9.2% 6 to 10 times, 26.15% 2 to 5 times and 8.5% once. Reasons were: better understanding of HS 68.9 %, information about treatments in general 52.6%, information about prescribed treatment 17.1 %, looking for a physician 23.4 %, discuss with other patients with HS 15.6 %.
- Patients declared that the information found on internet modify their way to take care of HS in 36.8 %, leading to more consultations in 22.4 %, less consultations in 9.15%. They thought information found on internet was credible in 73.2%.
- They were in majority not able to recall the websites they consulted.

Three quarters of HS patients use internet to gather information about their disease and the treatments. Further analysis will be performed to identify specific profile of patients.