

Skin Disorders Among Geriatric Population at a Tertiary Care Center in Uttarakhand

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Ageing results in decline of normal functioning in all organ systems including skin. This predisposes the elderly persons to develop various skin ailments. A thorough knowledge of different diseases prevalent in this population in different geographic regions help the health care providers in better health care policy making.

Aim: This study was planned to know the common dermatological diseases prevalent in Uttarakhand region of India.

Materials and Methods: Hospital out patients records maintained in Department of Dermatology, Venereology & Leprosy were analysed and information regarding age, sex and diagnosis of patients were recorded. Descriptive statistics for prevalence of skin diseases in patients presenting to hospital were calculated.

Results: Out of the total 29,422 patients seen in dermatology department from August 2012 to 2014, 4.7% (1,380) were aged 60 years and above. Male to female ratio was 2:1. Erythematous-squamous disorders taken collectively constituted the major skin disorder seen in 38.9% patients. This was followed by infections and infestations (29.9%), senile pruritus (9.0%) and age related skin changes (3.7%). Benign neoplasms were seen in 1.1% patients followed by cutaneous malignancies in 0.8% and precancerous lesions in 0.4%. Fungal infections were the most common infections seen in 18% patients.

Conclusion: This study strengthens the opinion that infections, senile pruritus and eczema-dermatitis are the major dermatological disorders in elderly population.

Keywords: Ageing, Dermatoses, Pruritus, Senile

INTRODUCTION

India entered the group of ageing countries in 2001 with the population of persons aged 60 years and above exceeding 7%. Further the geriatric population is expected to double by 2026. The reasons proposed for this are increase in life expectancy as well as decrease in birth rates [1]. Ageing results in variable spectrum of manifestations in all organ systems including skin. A decline in normal functions of skin predominantly its healing capacity, immune responsiveness and capacity to repair DNA occurs with aging [2]. Knowledge of common geriatric dermatoses in different regions can help us make effective health care policies. There are few Indian studies on the spectrum of geriatric dermatoses but none from Uttarakhand region situated in sub Himalayan range. This study was planned to know the common dermatological diseases prevalent in geriatric population in this region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted at Himalayan Institute of Medical Sciences, Dehradun, (Uttarakhand), India, which is a tertiary care hospital situated in sub-Himalayan region. In this retrospective study hospital patient records from August 2012-2014 were analysed. These registers were maintained in out patient department of Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprosy and contained information regarding age, sex and diagnosis of patients. Ethical clearance was taken from ethical committee of institute and the data was anonymized. From these records data of geriatric patients (60 years and above) was extracted. Three age groups were created: 60-69 years, 70-79 years and ≥ 80 years. The diseases were categorized into seven broad categories namely erythematous-squamous disorders, infectious diseases, benign neoplasms, precancerous lesions, cutaneous malignancies, age related skin changes and others. Descriptive statistics for the prevalence of skin diseases was calculated.

RESULTS

Total number of patients seen in Dermatology out patient department during the study period were 29422 and out of these 1380 (4.7%) were aged 60 years and above. There were 921 (66.7%) males and 459 (33.3%) females. Age of patients ranged from 60 years to 95 years with a mean age of 66.30 ± 6.37 years. 69.6% patients were in the age group 60-69 years. The distribution of patients in the different age groups is shown in [Table/Fig-1].

Age group (Years)	n=1380			
	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
60-69	610	44.2	351	25.4
70-79	258	18.7	98	7.1
≥ 80	53	3.8	10	0.7
Total	921	66.7	459	33.3

[Table/Fig-1]: Sex wise distribution of patients in different age groups.

Erythematous-squamous disorders taken collectively constituted the major skin disorder seen in 38.9% patients. This was followed by infections and infestations (29.9%), senile pruritus (9.0%) and age related skin changes (3.7%). Benign neoplasms were seen in 1.1% patients followed by cutaneous malignancies in 0.8% and precancerous lesions in 0.4%. The distribution of skin diseases according to gender and age group is shown in [Table/Fig-2].

Among the various erythematous-squamous disorders contact dermatitis was the most prevalent seen in 7.3% patients. This was followed closely by psoriasis (5.4%), endogenous eczema (4.1%), lichen planus (3.3%) and urticaria (3.0). Fungal infections were encountered in 18.0% patients. Out of this cutaneous dermatophytosis were seen in 76.3%, onychomycosis in 14.9% and candidiasis in 8.8% (n=249). 4.1% patients had presented with herpes zoster and 3.5% patients had post herpetic neuralgia.

Disease	Male	n=921	Female	n=459	Total	n=1380
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Psoriasis	52	5.6	23	5.0	75	5.4
Lichen planus	24	2.6	22	4.8	46	3.3
Seborrheic dermatitis	14	1.5	06	1.3	20	1.4
Contact dermatitis	78	8.5	23	5.0	101	7.3
Stasis dermatitis	08	0.87	00	0.0	08	0.6
Lichen simplex chronicus	17	1.8	09	2.0	26	1.9
Urticaria	26	2.8	16	3.5	42	3.0
Endogenous eczema	35	3.8	22	4.8	57	4.1
Other erythematous squamous disorders	104	11.4	58	12.6	162	11.8
Fungal infections	190	20.7	57	12.6	247	18.0
Viral infections	66	7.2	39	8.5	105	7.6
Bacterial infections	23	2.5	14	3.0	37	2.7
Scabies	24	2.6	10	2.2	34	2.5
Hansen's disease	19	2.0	3	0.7	22	1.6
Senile pruritus	74	8.0	51	11.1	125	9.0
Age related skin changes	31	3.4	20	4.4	51	3.7
Benign neoplasms	10	1.0	5	1.0	15	1.0
Precancerous lesions	1	0.1	4	0.9	5	0.4
Cutaneous malignancies	6	0.6	5	1.0	11	0.8
Others	119	13.0	72	15.7	191	13.9
Total	921	100	459	100	1380	100

[Table/Fig-2]: The distribution of skin diseases according to gender.

Pyodermas including folliculitis, furunculosis and cellulitis were seen in 2.7% patients. Scabies was encountered in 2.5% patients and 1.6% patients had Hansen's disease.

Senile pruritus was also a common diagnosis seen in 9.0% of the total cases. Seborrheic keratoses were the most common benign neoplasms seen in 5 patients and actinic keratosis most common precancerous lesion seen in 4 patients. Among the cutaneous malignancies basal cell carcinoma were seen in 7 patients followed by cutaneous metastasis in 2 patients and squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma in one patient each.

DISCUSSION

Elderly population aged 60 and above constitutes a large and rapidly growing segment of Indian population. Dermatological diseases in elderly are increasing and thus put a great burden on health care system. It is important to identify the patterns of geriatric skin disorders for effective delivery of health care services. Aim of the study was to determine the frequency and distribution of skin diseases in elderly.

S.No	Study	No. of patients	Erythematous squamous disorders	Infections & infestations	Benign neoplasms	Precancerous & cancerous lesions	Pruritus
1.	Darjani et al., (Northern Iran 2011) [3]	440	35.3%	20.2%	65%	41.5%	20.8%
2.	Grover S & Narasimhalu CRV (India 2009) [5]	200	66%	43.5%	74.5%	-	18.5%
3.	Yalcin et al., (Turkey 2006) [4]	4099	20.4%	33.8%	1.7%	5.2%	11.5%
4.	Liao et al., (Taiwan 2001) [7]	16,924	67.0%	58.9%	12.8%	2.1%	14.2%
5.	Present study	1380	38.9%	29.9%	1.1%	1.2%	9.0%

[Table/Fig-3]: Prevalence of skin disorders among geriatric population in various studies.

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