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Editor s picks July 2020

Does teledermoscopy hit the mark in Denmark?

Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, the subject of using teledermatology including teledermoscopy was already being studied, particularly given the rising skin cancer incidence. Now, teledermatology seems to be a safe and more widely accepted option, both during and after lockdown. As Skayem and colleagues stated in their May letter to the Editor, 'teledermatology is a weapon that dermatologists should use to play their indispensable role in controlling this pandemic.'

In this issue, a large prospective study on teledermoscopy was reported by Vestergaard *et al.* at a time when teledermatology was not recommended for suspicious skin tumours in Denmark. Images of 600 lesions in 519 patients were taken by general practitioners, therefore, mimicking the clinical situation where teledermoscopy would most likely be useful, and were independently evaluated by participating certified dermatologists. The images were of fair or good quality in approximately 90% of cases. While diagnostic accuracy was significantly higher for traditional face-to-face evaluations (Fig. 1), there was no statistically significant difference between the sensitivity obtained by teledermoscopy and by a face-to-face evaluation. In very few cases, melanoma could have been missed if only teledermoscopy had been used (as shown in Fig. 2, one of the two cases being on the scalp, an area less suitable for teledermoscopy).

Vestergaard T, Prasad SC, Schuster A, Laurinaviciene R, Andersen MK, Bygum A. Diagnostic accuracy and interobserver concordance: teledermoscopy of 600 suspicious skin lesions in Southern Denmark. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 2020; 1601-1608. https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.16275

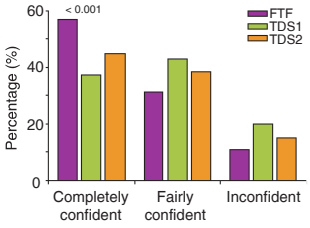

Figure 1 Diagnostic con dence of dermatologists on face-to-face evaluation and teledermoscopy. FTF, face-to-face; TDS, teledermoscopy.

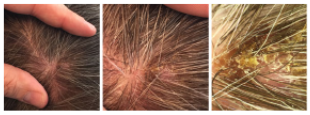

Figure 2 Mismanaged case using teledermoscopy: overview, close-up and dermoscopy of super cial spreading malignant melanoma (Breslow thickness 1.8 mm) on the scalp.

Peer support important for women with vulval conditions

Genital dermatoses are common yet likely underreported, with a marked impact on both daily and sexual quality of life. Akel *et al.* describe results from their survey of members of the 'Lady Garden Club,' a small peer support group in a British hospital initiated by women with vulval conditions. Since 2014, female members (mainly affected by lichen sclerosus) accompanied by a consultant dermatologist meet quarterly to discuss latest websites, publications and research.

The majority of the women thought that others with vulval conditions would benefit from membership of the group, and all appreciated the involvement of a vulval specialist. At least half of respondents reported depression or anxiety. The authors conclude that peer support networks with specialist clinical input are vital to optimise care for women with vulval conditions, and in light of these results, rapid referral to mental health services is a priority. Peer support provides an opportunity to explore sensitive issues, which can help address the unmet needs of patients and their partners.

Akel R, Cohen CE, Fuller C. The Lady Garden Club: supporting women with vulval conditions and their partners. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 2020; 1579-1582. https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.16276

'Covid toes'

A growing number of skin manifestations affecting patients with COVID-19 are being reported. In their letter to the Editor, Piccolo *et al.* describe chilblain-like lesions observed contemporaneously with COVID-19 spread (recently called 'Covid toes'). While primary chilblains are caused by cold exposure, secondary chilblains can be associated with several diseases (e.g. autoimmune disorders, hematologic disorders and rarely viral infections).

After contacting hundreds of Italian dermatologists and paediatricians, the authors collected data on these type of lesions over a 5-day period from 63 patients (median 14 years old). Few patients had comorbidities of autoimmune disease or coagulopathies. As shown on the cover page with photographs of toes affected by erythematous to purpuric lesions, it is of note that feet alone were mostly affected (86%). The erythematous-oedematous or blistering lesions were often accompanied by pain and itching, and systemic symptoms usually preceded dermatologic findings.

They speculate that although COVID-19 status was rarely available for these patients, this may be a delayed immune-mediated reaction to the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, children presenting with only skin manifestations potentially related to the virus should be suspected as being contagious. These findings are important for isolation strategies. If your patients experience similar presentations, you can visit the American Academy of Dermatology's registry or other European registries to report them: https://eadv.org/covid-19/further-reading.

Piccolo V, Neri I, Filippeschi C *et al.* Chilblain-like lesions during COVID-19 epidemic: a preliminary study on 63 patients. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 2020; e291-e293. https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.16526

Big data on minimal erythema dose, recognizing Dr. Xuemin Wang

Studies about minimal erythema dose (MED), the dose of UVB irradiation which leads to a minimally noticeable skin erythema, have produced inconsistent results in small numbers. Tan *et al.* carried out an unprecedented study of MED based on big data (a sample size of over 20 000 vs. hundreds in the past), which according to the authors provided the statistical power to confidently clarify the controversies in the field. According to their study, MED is associated with skin colour, sex, season and meteorological factors, but not with age. Interestingly, females seem to have lower MED than males, but only because they have lighter skin; given the same skin colour, females actually have significantly higher MED than males.

Hereafter, we also wanted to recognize the endeavours of the deceased Dr. Xuemin Wang, one of the co-authors of this study.

Dr. Wang was the former director of the Skin and Cosmetic Research Department at Shanghai Skin Disease Hospital, where this study took place. He oversaw most of the data collection process before passing away in February 2016. This work is part of the extraordinary legacies from Dr. Wang to the department and to the field of skin and cosmetic research in general. Dr. Wang truly inspired and facilitated this research. Thanks to him, the department has become one of the most influential places for cosmetic safety and efficacy testing in China, completing more than 60% of registered tests in the whole country. Because of his rigorous work, the data collected during testing are also up to the standard for research purposes, and we are able to contribute the robust results of MED measuring based on more than twenty thousand subjects collected in the past decade.

Indeed, Dr. Wang was a man of character, a rigorous researcher, a very reputable dermatologist in China and a role model for many. It is a great honour that this article is an Editor's Pick for JEADV. The authors hope that this will be a great inspiration for young doctors working in the hospital, and for all the doctors and researchers in the field of skin and cosmetic research in China.

Tan Y, Wang F, Fan G *et al.* Identification of factors associated with minimal erythema dose variations in a large-scale population study of 22 146 subjects. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 2020; 1595-1600. https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.16206