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Comment on “Herpes zoster in the era of COVID 19: A prospective observational study to probe the association of herpes zoster with COVID 19 infection and vaccination”

Ye Li ¹

Jing Li ²

Mei Cha ²

1.Department of Hospital Infection, the People's Hospital of Jianyang City, Sichuan 641400,China.

2.Department of Hospital Infection,Chengdu Women's and Children's Central Hospital, School of Medicine, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China,Chengdu 611731,China.

Correspondence: Mei Cha , Department of Hospital Infection,Chengdu Women's and Children's Central Hospital, School of Medicine, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China,Chengdu 611731,China. Email: chamei1230456@163.com

ORCID

Mei Cha <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2378-8032>

Keywords: Drug reaction, Infection- bacterial/Fungal/Viral, Dermatopathology

To Editor,

We read with interest the article by Almutairi N et al published in the Dermatologic Therapy.¹ They investigated clinical presentations of herpes zoster (HZ) infection in the era of Covid infection and mRNA- Corona Virus 2019 (COVID-19) vaccination. They reported several patients developed HZ after the first dose or the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. They considered that COVID-19 not only involved respiratory system but could affect several organ systems including the skin. HZ infection may be a worrying sign of a subclinical COVID-19. We agree with this viewpoint.

As COVID-19 vaccine is widely inoculated around the world, there is a growing concern about adverse cutaneous reactions associated with COVID-19 infection. HZ is an acute infectious skin disease that is contagious. Scholars previously reported that vaccines such as inactivated influenza, hepatitis A, and rabies with Japanese encephalitis vaccines could result in reactivation of herpesvirus infections.²

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some research reports showed that COVID-19 vaccination might be associated with HZ reactivation.³⁻⁶ COVID-19 vaccine-induced dysregulation of immune regulation, particularly T-cell regulation, may play an important role in the reactivation of HZ in patients.⁷ Just to make it clear, it is not clear whether there is a causal link between COVID-19 vaccine and reaction of HZ

This article has been accepted for publication and undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process which may lead to differences between this version and the [Version of Record](#). Please cite this article as doi: [10.1111/dth.15742](https://doi.org/10.1111/dth.15742)

infections.

In addition, some researchers pointed out that increased psychosocial stress due to the COVID-19 epidemic might also be an important factor in HZ reactivation.⁸⁻¹⁰ Psychosocial stress also deserves attention during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Thus it can be seen that attention should be paid to the possibility of HZ reactivation after COVID-19 vaccination. Clinical care and infection control practices should be taken to prevent the occurrence of HZ in COVID-19 vaccination in patients. Once the diagnosis of HZ is confirmed in patients after the COVID-19 vaccine, early treatment with effective anti-HZ medications and prevention of complications should be implemented.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Ye Li : Conceived the idea and wrote first draft.

Jing Li: Reviewed the literature and critically reviewed the manuscript.

Mei Cha: Reviewed the manuscript and provided final approval of manuscript.

FUNDING

None

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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