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Update on the cutaneous manifestations of COVID-19



The prevalence of cutaneous manifestations in COVID-19 may be higher than suggested in an earlier study of patients in mainland China.¹ That report found that dermatitis, in association with COVID-19, occurred in 2 out of 1099 patients (0.2%).

A more recent correspondence from Italy indicated that out of 88 patients with COVID-19, 18 patients (20.4%) developed skin manifestations: 14 patients had an erythematous dermatitis, 3 patients had widespread urticaria, and 1 patient had chicken-pox-like vesicles.² The trunk was the main involved region, and the dermatitis usually healed in a few days. There was no apparent correlation with disease severity.

The cutaneous manifestations of COVID-19 may be even more varied. The National Union of Dermatologists and Venereologists (Syndicat National des Dermatologues-Vénérologues), in a press release, announced other possible cutaneous signs of COVID-19.³ This includes acro clinical manifestations such as pseudo-chilblains on fingertips and toes, the sudden outbreak of persisting red patches sometimes painful, and mild urticarial lesions.⁴ These skin findings may not be accompanied by pulmonary signs, yet the patients are potentially contagious, and testing for COVID-19 should be initiated.

As COVID-19 spreads across the world, more reports on the skin manifestations of COVID-19 will likely appear. It is hoped that we can continue to rapidly share with one another any new information that develops so that we can better recognize and treat this deadly virus.

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