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The associations of coping strategies on quality of life for patients with hidradenitis suppurativa

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Data collected via University of Windsor was part of a larger study. Partial results are reported below as data continues to be collected at other sites:

While hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) severity varies among patients, it is correlated with worsening health related quality of life (HRQOL). Additionally, there is an association between HS and negative psychosocial effects (e.g., depression). The objective of this study was to investigate coping strategies used by patients with HS and the associations of the strategies with HRQOL. A cross-sectional survey was issued to patients with HS at four different sites. The survey included a demographics and disease activity scale, the Brief COPE, the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), and the Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI). ANCOVA analyses showed that sex ($p = 0.03$), depression ($p=0.0002$), self-reported disease severity ($p<0.0001$), and avoidant coping methods ($p=0.006$) were significantly associated with worsening HRQOL. As avoidant coping methods stood out in this analysis for impacting HRQOL, we created moderation and mediation models to explore this relationship further. A comparison between a reduced regression model (including disease severity, sex, depression score and avoidant coping) and an expanded model (included the additional interaction term of depression and avoidant coping) showed no moderation effect. Mediation analysis was done using the Sobel test with avoidant coping as the independent variable, HRQOL as the dependent variable, and depression as a potential mediating variable. This analysis showed significant associations in the models both with [c' : -0.55 (0.15); $p=0.0003$] and without [c : -0.85 (0.15); $p<0.0001$] depression as a mediator. Based on this analysis, HRQOL for patients with HS is significantly associated with self-reported disease severity, sex, depression score, and the use of avoidant coping methods. Additionally, depression mediates the association between avoidant coping methods and HRQOL; thus avoidant coping methods are significantly associated with depression and HRQOL. As coping methods can be learned and altered over time, focusing on coping methods that improve HRQOL may also mitigate the effect of depression symptoms.