

Is There a Difference in the Treatment of Acne Between Women and Men?

Possible gender differences in quality of life and choice of therapy in acne have been studied. It seems that females receive more advanced treatment than males.

Below is a summary of a recently published paper by Berg & Lindberg. The reference for the whole article is the following: *Berg M, Lindberg M. Possible gender differences in the quality of life and choice of therapy in acne. J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol 2010 Nov 25. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-3083.2010.03907.x. [Epub ahead of print].*

Acne is a disfiguring disease that primarily affects young people. It is very common in dermatological practice. There is a wide range of effective therapies for acne, of which isotretinoin is the most effective, but which also has possible dangerous side-effects. In the present study, Berg and Lindberg used the Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) to measure the impact of acne on patients' quality of life.

Two hundred and eleven consecutive patients, 143 females and 68 males, were studied. Initially, the DLQI indicated that females scored worse, but this did not correlate with the clinical grading. Six months later the same procedure was repeated and the results correlated with the clinical outcome. Patients with acne who were treated with isotretinoin showed a significantly greater improvement in quality of life than those not treated with isotretinoin. Female patients tended to be treated with isotretinoin to a greater extent than men.

In my view, this is a very interesting study, which indicates that females receive more advanced treatment than males. This is in opposition to the situation described earlier for psoriasis. The reasons for this can only be speculative. Further studies concerning gender aspects in dermatology are warranted.



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