[Body dysmorphic disorder in dermatology: diagnosis, epidemiology and clinical aspects].

[Article in Portuguese]

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Source

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Abstract

Cosmetic concerns are becoming increasingly common in view of the obsession with the perfect body and skin. Dermatologists are often seen to evaluate and treat these conditions. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the existence of Body Dysmorphic Disorder, also known as dysmorphophobia. Despite being relatively common, this disorder has not been well researched. Sometimes causing impairment, the disease involves a distorted body image perception characterized by excessive preoccupation with a perceived defect. Most of the patients experience some degree of impairment in social or occupational functioning and, as a result of their obsessive concerns, they may develop compulsive behaviors. In severe cases, there is a risk of suicide. Most individuals do not acknowledge that their defect is minimal or nonexistent and seek out cosmetic treatments for a psychiatric disorder. The prevalence of this disorder among the general population ranges from 1 to 2 % and in dermatological and cosmetic surgery patients, from 2.9 to 16%. The training of professionals to systematically investigate, diagnose, and refer these patients to adequate psychiatric treatment is essential, considering the high prevalence of Body Dysmorphic Disorder in dermatological patients and the fact that cosmetic treatments rarely improve their condition.