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18th Annual Child Health Research Days
October 25 - 27, 2022

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

CHR D 2022: Abstract & Poster Submission Form

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Presenter Status

- Undergraduate Students
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Research Category

- Basic Science
- Clinical
- Community Health / Policy

Role in the project

- Design
- Perform Experiments
- Analyze Data
- Write Abstract

Title

Never Enough: Feelings of Inadequacy Among Mothers of Infants with Atopic Dermatitis

Background

Atopic dermatitis affects ~15% of infants, and is characterised by damage to the skin barrier, and results in itches that rash. Despite substantial time investments to manage the condition, itching and rashes may persist. Herein, we explored mothers' perceptions of atopic disease management.

Objective

N/a

Methods

Mothers were recruited through social media and tertiary care clinics, and participated in semi-structured qualitative interviews, which were recorded, transcribed and analyzed thematically. Atopic dermatitis severity was reported by mothers using the Patient-Oriented Scoring Atopic Dermatitis tool (PO-SCORAD; maximum score=103 and categorized as; mild<25; moderate 25-50; severe>50).

Results

In total, 10 mothers whose infants had mild-moderate atopic dermatitis participated. Specific to the perceptions of atopic disease management, we identified the themes of feeling inadequate, feelings of self-blame, feelings of failure and feelings of being judged. This led to feelings of embarrassment when atopic dermatitis was pointed out by others and having to be protective over their child, particularly at initial disease presentation prior to diagnosis. As one mother described "I am scared that it is going to spread all over his body and all over his face and his scalp too and it is like what have I done wrong." Feelings of failure as a mother continued if the atopic dermatitis did not respond to treatment or was perceived as being dismissed by clinical professionals. Most mothers also expressed concerns that atopic dermatitis could lead to bullying or adversely impact self-esteem and confidence as the infant got older, further exacerbating feelings of failure.

Conclusion

Despite investing heavily in the management of the disease, mothers of infants with atopic dermatitis still reported feelings of inadequacy and concerns for the future. This also serves as a reminder for clinicians about the self-blame that mothers experience.

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