

Photodynamic therapy: a treatment tool for hidradenitis suppurativa

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Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a chronic, recurrent, debilitating inflammatory disease of unknown aetiology. The current standard of care for HS includes antibiotics (oral/topical), retinoids (oral/topical) and intralesional steroids. However, the recurrence of the disease and the unsuccessful of the different treatments stimulate findings of different therapy using light source. Among these, photodynamic therapy with 5-aminolevulinic acid (ALA-PDT) has been proposed by some authors recently. In this study we report the experience of 15 patients affected by HS resistant to conventional therapy treated with ALA-PDT. 15 patients (14 females and 1 male) aged from 18 to 35 years (average age 25 ± 7.5) with HS were recruited from the outpatient clinic at the Department of Dermatology, University of "Federico II", Naples from September 2008 through October 2011. The evaluation of severity was done using Sartorius score before the first treatment (T0), after 3 PDT sessions (T1), and after 6 PDT sessions (T2). A questionnaire evaluating different factors involved in HS natural history and quality of life was administered to all patients. All patients showed a reduction in lesions number resulting in a reduction of Sartorius score. The mean of the Sartorius score was 67 before first irradiation session (T0), 35 after 3 irradiation sessions (T1) and 22 after 6 irradiation sessions (T2). The efficacy of PDT showed in our patients supports the literature indicating ALA-PDT may be a valuable treatment option in this debilitating disease but further studies are necessary to standardize the procedure (time of application, number of sessions, light sources used) and optimize treatments.