

Vitiligo and Skincare Physicians Meeting

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The utility of performing routine blood investigations for associated autoimmune disease in patients with non-segmental vitiligo in South Africa

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The exact prevalence of vitiligo in South Africa is not known, but what is well known is the severe impact on quality of life, particularly in dark-skinned individuals. Uncertainty prevails on the importance and cost-effectiveness of autoimmune screening blood investigations in asymptomatic patients newly diagnosed with non-segmental vitiligo (NSV). The aim of this study was to ascertain whether the investigations routinely requested in all patients with newly diagnosed NSV yield any clinically relevant abnormalities. Over a one-year period we performed full-blood count, iron, ferritin, vitamin B12, thyroid stimulating hormone (with additional thyroxin T4 if abnormal), antinuclear antibodies, thyroid antibodies (including thyroid antimicrosomal antibody also known as antithyroid peroxidase antibodies and thyroglobulin antibodies) and a random blood glucose level on 110 patients (mean age 34.0 years, 74 females). 41 (37.3%) had significant abnormalities. In total, 35 patients (31.8%) were diagnosed with clinically significant related diseases at the time of presentation or within 12 months follow up. The diagnoses included iron-deficiency anemia (n=16), autoimmune thyroid diseases (n=11) and type 1 diabetes mellitus (n=3). After one year, 4 patients with antimicrosomal antibodies and 2 patients with antinuclear antibodies remained free of any systemic involvement. In conclusion, almost a third of patients with NSV had an associated clinically significant systemic disease, suggesting that “routine” screening remains relevant.

Biography

Susanna M H Kannenberg is a graduate of Stellenbosch University, South Africa. She has qualified Medical doctor degree in 1999 and worked in various hospitals and community health centers in South Africa and the United Kingdom. She has received her MMed in Dermatology cum laude from Stellenbosch University in 2012. She is a Dermatology Consultant at Tygerberg Academic Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa with limited private practice. She is also involved with the dermatology training of pre and postgraduate students. She has a special interest in vitiligo, atopic dermatitis and pediatric dermatology.

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