

A HOLISTIC VIEW ON GENITAL DERMATOLOGY

Embark on a world tour of the major studies into diagnosis and management of thrush in women or find out some tips to help manage male patients with genital disease. These are but two of the presentations at the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in Melbourne on 18 to 21 May 2019.

Genital skin problems are very common and can be itchy or painful, distressing and embarrassing. They can interfere with sexual functioning, self-image and interpersonal relationships. Some genital disorders are contagious, including sexually transmitted diseases; and some are chronic diseases that require lifelong management.

Associate Professor Anthony Hall, dermatologist and ACD Fellow says: “Taking history allows fears to be raised as many patients have fear of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) or cancer. If malignancy cannot be excluded clinically, take a genital skin biopsy. If a skin biopsy is needed, proceed quickly as any delay increases patient anxiety. Lie the patient down and use an absorbable suture. Explain the diagnosis and reassure the patient to help allay any fears. Reset patient expectations and set realistic goals. A supportive doctor-patient relationship very important.”

“Genital diseases in men are associated with significant impairment in quality of life. Many genital skin diseases are unrecognised and under-diagnosed. Almost all patients with male genital lichen sclerosis are uncircumcised and there is no evidence of co-morbidities with other auto immune diseases.”

Thrush affects 75% of women on at least one occasion over a lifetime.

Dr Tania Day says: “Our journey to understand the diagnosis and management of thrush begins in the United States of America, then travels through Europe and ends in Australia with College Fellow, Associate Professor Gayle Fischer’s, work. Across these three continents, we find major differences in study inclusion criteria, treatment protocols, and definitions of outcomes. When we understand how these studies were designed, we can recognise whether or not the results apply to the woman sitting in our consultation room. Women with thrush show a spectrum of symptoms and examination findings, and each requires a thoughtful, individualised management plan.”

ENDS

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The ACD is the peak medical college accredited by the Australian Medical Council for the training and professional development of medical practitioners in the specialty of dermatology. They provide authoritative information about dermatology to Government, the media, other health professionals and the general public.

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