Nuchal Nevus flammeus in Alopecia areata

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Sir,

In 1988 Hatzis et al. [1] suggested that nuchal nevus flammeus was present in 58.20% of the totalis-universalis form of alopecia areata and in 22.80% of the ophiasis-extensive forms but only in 3.60% of a simple patch of alopecia areata and in 4.50% of the control group (555 volunteers without alopecia areata).

For 1 year we have observed our patients with androgenetic alopecia (first control group), and with the aid of a colleague we revised the newborns of our hospital area (second control group) looking for nuchal nevus flammeus.

Our study included 118 patients with alopecia areata, the first 118 patients with androgenetic alopecia, male and female, and all the newborns from December 1989 to December 1990 in the university area of our hospital, a total of 1,027 children [2].

We found nuchal nevus flammeus in 51 patients with alopecia areata (43.20%), in 31 patients with male and female androgenetic alopecia (26.30%) and in 160 newborns (15.60%).

We did not find any significant differences with the χ analysis, neither between the single-patch form of alopecia areata and the control groups I and II nor between the multiple-patch form and the first control group. However, totalis. universalis, ophiasis and the pooled alopecia areata cases had significant values as compared to both control groups (table 1).

When our results are considered in relation with the first control group, the difference might be a consequence of the fact that the nevus flammeus is easily seen in patients with the nuchal area absolutely bald. The results in newborns. whose nuchal area is generally bald and who were usually controlled during the following 3 months, strongly suggest that severe alopecia areata is indeed associated with nuchal nevus flammeus.

References

Hatzis J. Kostakis P, Tosca A, Parissis N, Nicolis G. Varelzidis A, Stratigos J: Nuchal nevus flammeus as a skin marker of prognosis in alopecia areata. *Dermatologica* 1988;177: 149-151.

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Table 1. Nuchal nevus flammeus