In Reply. Nuchal Nevus flammeus

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In one of the last issues of *Dermatologica* we proposed that nuchal nevus flammeus (NNF) might be a valuable marker indicating a more severe course of alopecia areata (AA) [1].

We would like to thank Prof. Manzke for his interest in our article [2]. His explanation about NNF is that in patients with AA it is rather a sign of epidermal atrophy visualizing the ectasia of subpapillary vessels in the nape than a concomitant skin abnormality.

Prof. Manzke's opinion needs in vivo measurements on epidermal thickness for further confirmation. However, in NNF biopsies from 5 AA patients we observed a moderate vasodilatation and no signs of epidermal atrophy (flattening of dermoepidermal grooves, thinning of epidermis, etc.) [1].

This view does not change the value of NNF as skin marker in AA prognosis, because, no matter whether it is due to epidermal thinning or not, this clinical sign (NNF) is observed with a high incidence in severe forms of AA [1].

Reference

Hatzis J, Kostakis P, Tosca A, et al: Nuchal nevus flammeus as a skin marker of prognosis in alopecia areata. *Dermatologica* 1988;177:149.

Manzke H: Incidence of Nuchal nevus flammeus. *Dermatologica* 1989;179:55.