

Delays in diagnosis, variations in treatment for morphea

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Weilan Johnson, M.D., from the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, and Heidi Jacobe, M.D., from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, assessed the duration between morphea onset and diagnosis in a cohort of 224 patients. The specialty of the

provider, initial evaluation, and therapy were also examined.

The researchers found that 63 percent of patients received a diagnosis more than six months after morphea onset. Most patients (83.5 percent) were diagnosed and treated by [dermatologists](#), with the more severe forms of morphea (linear and generalized) diagnosed and treated by rheumatologists. [Topical corticosteroids](#) were the most commonly prescribed therapy (63 percent). Dermatologists mainly prescribed topical treatments or [phototherapy](#), even for those with linear and generalized morphea, while rheumatologists mainly prescribed systemic immunosuppressives and physical therapy.

"In summary, we identified several factors that impact the care of patients with morphea," the authors write. "These include delay in diagnosis and treatment, large variation in evaluation and therapy based on the specialty of the provider, and widespread use of evaluations and therapy with little evidence for their efficacy."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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