

Skin diseases are more common than we think

March 20 2019

Skin diseases are ranked as the fourth most common cause of human illness, but many affected people do not consult a physician. A new *Journal of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology* study estimates the prevalence of skin diseases outside the typical medical setting.

To include people who never or rarely seek medical aid, the study did not rely on health insurance data, but rather on data collected at the Munich Oktoberfest in Germany. Screening examinations were performed randomly on participating visitors.

Of the 2,701 individuals in the study, at least one skin abnormality was observed in 1,662 of the participants (64.5 percent). The most common diagnoses were [actinic keratosis](#) (26.6 percent), rosacea (25.5 percent), and eczema (11.7 percent). Skin diseases increased with age and were more frequent in men (72.3 percent) than in women (58.0 percent). Nearly two-thirds of the affected participants were unaware of their abnormal skin findings.

"Skin diseases might be even more prevalent than previously thought. Considering their significant impact on individual, family, and [social life](#) as well as their heavy economic burden caused by inadequate self- or non-physician treatment, the public health importance of skin diseases is underappreciated," said senior author Dr. Alexander Zink, of the Technical University of Munich. "Information and awareness campaigns are needed to better address this neglected issue and to reduce the global

burden of [skin diseases](#)."

More information: L. Tizek et al, Skin diseases are more common than we think: screening results of an unreferral population at the Munich Oktoberfest, *Journal of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/jdv.15494](https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.15494)

Provided by Wiley

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