

Chronic urticaria carries substantial cost burden

Chronic idiopathic or spontaneous urticaria (CIU/CSU) carries a substantial cost burden, according to the findings of a US study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Dermatology*.

This retrospective cross-sectional cohort study, estimated the prevalence CIU/CSU, comorbidities, healthcare use (medications, office visits, emergency department visits, and hospitalisations), and urticaria-related and all-cause costs in insured patients continuously enrolled in a large US commercial health plan in 2012.

The prevalence of CIU/CSU was 0.11% (6350 patients in a population of approximately 5.8 million). Healthcare was most commonly provided by primary care physicians (52%) and allergists (19%) and the most frequently prescribed drugs were corticosteroids (55% of patients). The mean number of office visits per year was 15. Mean all-cause healthcare costs per patient were \$9142* per year, with outpatient services accounting for 43% of total costs (\$3930). Mean urticaria-related costs were \$997 per year, with outpatient services accounting for 66% of total urticaria-related costs (\$686) and medications accounting for 31% of urticaria-related costs (\$312). Mean costs were \$2676 in patients aged up to 5 years of age and increased to \$14 234 in those aged 65 years and over ($p < 0.001$). All-cause costs were significantly higher in women than in men (\$9507 vs \$8354; $p = 0.038$) and urticaria-related costs were also significantly higher in women (\$1048 vs \$887; $p = 0.003$).

"Urticaria-related healthcare resource use is relatively low, suggesting that CIU/CSU patients seek care frequently for reasons not coded as related to urticaria," commented the authors.

* 2012 US dollars

Broder MS, et al. Resource Use and Costs in an Insured Population of Patients with Chronic Idiopathic/Spontaneous Urticaria. *American Journal of Clinical Dermatology* : 9 Jun 2015. Available from: URL: <http://doi.org/10.1007/s40257-015-0134-8>

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