

SKIN PICKING IN POLISH STUDENTS

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Introduction: Skin Picking behavior is characterized by repetitive episodes of digging, squeezing or picking the skin causing tissue damage, functional impairment and distress.

Aim: The aim of the study was to investigate the skin picking frequency and the picking episodes' characteristics in the Polish students' population.

Methods: The participants were 436 university students, 297 (68,11%) women and 139 (31,88%) men. The age of participants ranged from 19 to 30 years (M=23,21 (SD=8,84). All participants were assessed by the Skin Picking Scale and the Skin Picking Impact Scale translated into Polish by authors. They also completed the list of items concerning skin picking site, picking frequency, methods of picking and affective consequences of picking.

Results: Two hundred ten (48,16%) of the participants reported that they currently pick their skin. One hundred thirty students (29,81%) endorsed the functional impairment caused by picking, ninety three of them (21,33%) felt distressed as a consequence of picking. Most participants, who endorsed the picking behaviors, pick from their faces, fingers and scalps, but numerous other sites were endorsed. Participants usually pick with their fingers and nails and were aware of picking during picking episodes. Forty three participants (20,47%) reported that their picking was preceded by an urge always or in most cases; however 66 participants (31,43%) claimed that they had never felt urge prior to picking. The commonest consequences of picking reported by participants were the experience of relief and the feeling of anger.

Conclusion: Skin picking is a common behavior among the Polish students.