# Self-inflicted skin lesions in practice - case reports

Anna Zalewska-Janowska

Psychodermatology Department
Interfaculty Chair of Clinical Immunology
and Microbiology, Medical University of Lodz, poLAND

#### **Presentation Outline**

- General characteristics of self-inflicted skin lesions
- Selected diagnoses for self-inflicted skin lesions
- Clinical presentations examples
- Take home massage

## Self – inflicted skin lesions general characteristics

- "hollow history" patient resistance to fully describe the evolution of skin lesions
- numerous professional consultations
- conscious/unconscious performance
- triggering/exacerbating actions
- areas accessible to manipulation
- bizarre morphology
- severity span

# Self – inflicted skin diseases – selected diagnoses

- Lichen simplex
- Dermatitis artefacta
- Neurotic excoriations
- Acne excoriée
- Münchausen syndrome
- Malingering (disease simulation)

#### Dermatitis artefacta

- Unconscious action (mostly); patients do not admit to manipulation
- F:M = 3:1 to 20:1
- "cry for help"
- borderline or paranoid personality











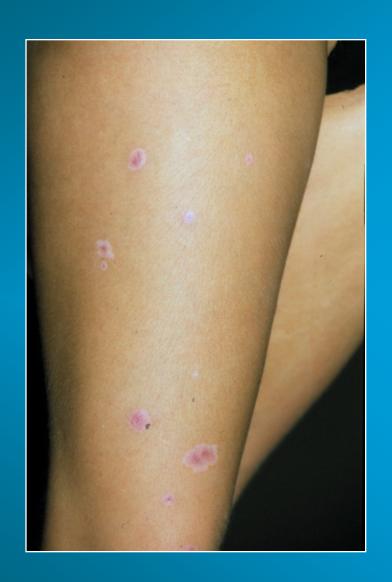






#### Neurotic excoriations

- majority patients admit to self-manipulation
- mainly middle-aged single women
- difficulties in problem verbalizing
- vicious circle itching-scratching









#### Acne excoriée

- squeezing and picking the acne lesions under stress;
   sometimes lack of comedos
- female predominance
- mean age 30 years; mainly face
- co-existence phobias, depression







## Münchausen syndrome

- dramatic presentation of symptoms, in the middle of the night
- male predominance
- aim gaining the constant medical care ("hospital dependence")
- psychopathic personality, antisocial behaviour









## Malingering

- totally conscious performance
- aim responsibility avoidance, financial gain, earlier pension
- male predominance
- borderline or paranoid personality















## Take home message

 When skin lesions present bizarre morphology or recur "too often" despite professional treatment → THINK about different goals of the patient and the doctor and ACT accordingly...

# THANK YOU