



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Teledermatology in paediatrics. Observations in daily clinical practice^{☆,☆☆}



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Agreement;
Dermatology;
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Abstract

Introduction: Teledermatology is a technique that is increasingly being developed. There are many studies that assess this discipline in the general population, but few studies analyse the paediatric population exclusively. The aims of this study are to describe the distribution of diseases consulted through teledermatology, the use of this technique to avoid face-to-face consultations, and the agreement between virtual and face-to-face diagnoses, in the paediatric population.

Material and methods: The work consisted of an observational and retrospective study of the virtual consultations made between May 2011 and January 2015 through a store-and-forward teledermatology programme, involving patients from 0 to 15 years. We collected demographic data, as well as the diagnoses made by the paediatrician who made the virtual consultation, and by the dermatologists who assessed the virtual and the face-to-face consultations, the indication given by the dermatologist who assessed the virtual consultation (discharge or referral), reason for referral, and diagnostic agreement rate.

Results: A total of 183 virtual consultations were analysed. The most frequent diagnoses were inflammatory diseases (39%), benign pigmented lesions (23%), and infectious diseases (20%). Almost half of the virtual consultations (48%) were referred to a face-to-face diagnosis. Diagnostic agreement between the dermatologist who evaluated the virtual consultation and the dermatologist who evaluated the face-to-face consultation was 89%, and 66% between the paediatrician who made the virtual consultation and the dermatologist who assessed it.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Concordancia;
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Eficiencia;
Pediatria;
Telemedicina

Conclusions: Virtual consultations have a similar disease distribution to conventional (face-to-face) referrals. Approximately half of the virtual consultations do not require a subsequent face-to-face visit. The agreement rate between the diagnoses given by both dermatologists (virtual and face-to-face diagnoses) is high.

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Tele dermatología en edad pediátrica. Observaciones en la práctica clínica diaria**Resumen**

Introducción: La tele dermatología es una técnica en expansión. Múltiples trabajos evalúan esta disciplina en la población general, siendo pocos los estudios que analizan la población pediátrica. Nuestro objetivo consistió en describir el tipo de patología consultada a través de esta técnica, su capacidad resolutoria y el grado de concordancia entre los diagnósticos virtuales y presenciales, en población pediátrica.

Material y métodos: El trabajo consistió en un estudio observacional retrospectivo de las consultas virtuales realizadas entre mayo de 2011 y enero de 2015 a pacientes de 0 a 15 años, mediante un sistema de tele dermatología diferida. Se recogieron datos demográficos, diagnósticos indicados por el pediatra realizador de la teleconsulta y por los dermatólogos que evaluaron las consultas virtuales y presenciales, actitud a seguir indicada por el dermatólogo en la consulta virtual (alta/remisión a consulta), motivo de remisión y grado de acuerdo entre los diagnósticos emitidos.

Resultados: Se analizaron 183 teleconsultas. Los diagnósticos más frecuentes fueron patología inflamatoria (39%), lesiones pigmentadas benignas (23%) y patología infecciosa (20%). El 48% de las teleconsultas requirieron una visita presencial posterior. La concordancia diagnóstica entre el dermatólogo evaluador de la teleconsulta y el dermatólogo realizador de la consulta presencial fue del 89%, y entre el pediatra y el dermatólogo evaluador de la teleconsulta, del 66%.

Conclusiones: Las patologías consultadas a través de tele dermatología presentan una distribución similar a las consultas presenciales. Aproximadamente, la mitad de las teleconsultas no requiere evaluación presencial posterior. El grado de acuerdo entre el dermatólogo evaluador de la teleconsulta y el que realiza la consulta presencial es elevado.

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Introduction

Telemedicine is an expanding discipline. Because of the importance of images, dermatology is one of the specialties in which it has been most extensively implemented. In general terms there are 2 systems for conducting tele dermatology: one by store-and-forward and the other in real time, in which doctors and patients communicate at the same time. Most studies show greater agreement between virtual and face-to-face diagnoses with real-time systems. However, store-and-forward systems are more feasible in day-to-day clinical practice, and are therefore the most widely used.^{1,2}

There are many studies that evaluate various aspects of this technique, such as patient satisfaction, diagnostic agreement with in-person visits and ability to resolve the condition. In general, most of these studies assess all the consultations conducted, which primarily involve adult patients.^{3,4} There are few observations that focus solely on the paediatric population.

Our objective was to carry out a descriptive analysis of the types of disease that give rise to consultation by tele dermatology, the ability of this form of consultation to resolve the condition and the rate of agreement between the diagnoses made by the various doctors assessing the same patient, focusing throughout on the paediatric population.

Material and methods

The research consisted of a retrospective observational study of the teleconsultations made to patients in the paediatric age group through a store-and-forward tele dermatology system in the Complejo Hospitalario de Pontevedra (EOXI Pontevedra-Salnés). Tele dermatology was gradually introduced in Galicia from 2001 and began to operate in our hospital in May 2011. Therefore, the period of our study was from May 2011 to January 2015. The teleconsultations were from paediatric primary care, which in the Autonomous Committee of Galicia comprises children aged from 0 to 15 years inclusive. Through the SIGAP (Integrated Primary Care

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