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Abstract

Background: Skin problems associated with the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) have been reported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aims: To determine the skin problems experienced by healthcare workers in Türkiye who used PPE during COVID-19 and the effect of these problems on their quality-of-life.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted from 30 November 2020 to 30 May 2021. Data were collected from 404 healthcare workers recruited via social media. Participants completed a skin problem evaluation form and Skindex-16, which measures the effects of skin disease on quality-of-life. The t test and ANOVA were used to analyse differences between the means.

Results: Most (85.1%) of the participants were nurses and 38.6% worked in COVID-19 intensive care units. All the participants wore gloves (53.2% wore double gloves), 99.3% wore surgical masks and 56.2% wore protective glasses. They washed their hands on average 31.94 [standard deviation (SD) 27.55] times a day. Skin problems developed were mostly around the forehead, hands, nose, and ears. The mean (SD) Skindex-16 score was 45.42 (26.31). Based on Skindex scores, respondents with chronic skin problems had a significantly lower quality-of-life than those without skin problems, as did those who developed skin problems during the COVID-19 pandemic than those who did not (P□