

Assessment of hair and scalp symptoms knowledge among over 10 000 Chinese dermatologic patients: a cross-sectional descriptive survey

Di Zong¹, Shuxia Yang²

¹Active Cosmetics Division, L'Oréal China, Shanghai, China, ²Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Peking University First Hospital, Beijing, China Med

1 INTRODUCTION

Healthy Hair is essential to our well-being, health, and Quality of Life (QoL).^{1,2} The number of patients with scalp or hair conditions is rapidly increasing.³ However, a low level of awareness discourages many patients from seeking medical advice.

Research about the patients' scalp and hair conditions and knowledge of common diseases along with treatment among dermatologic patients in China, is still insufficient.

2 OBJECTIVES

This study investigated the level of scalp and hair disease burden, the knowledge about the conditions and treatment/caring needs among the general dermatologic patient population in China.

Moreover, this study intended to provide information and to create awareness of both dermatologists and patients in order to improve diagnosis, treatment/care, and patient education.

3 MATERIALS & METHODS

- A cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted among patients consulting for any dermatologic conditions.
- A total of 11 tertiary-level hospitals were selected.
- Patients were instructed to complete an online pre-designed questionnaire (using a visual analogic scale, VAS), including scalp and hair symptoms and DLQI scale⁴, disease knowledge, current status and needs of diagnosis, treatment and care.

4 RESULTS

• Patient data

- 10 305 valid questionnaires were collected.
- 68.8% of subjects were female, 69.5% of subjects were aged 18-39 years.
- 29.6% of subjects complained about their scalp and hair conditions.
- 87.9% of the all subjects had hair or scalp condition.
- 55.3% of subjects were concerned about the health of their scalp and hair.

• Distribution of signs and symptoms

- 87.9% of subjects had at least one moderate to severe scalp or hair condition, (Figure 1).
- 28.3% of subjects had all symptoms, and more than 30% of subjects had moderate to severe scalp erythema and scalp sensitivity reported.
- In subjects with dandruff, greasy scalp (87.7%) and greasy hair (79.8%) as well as itchy scalp (81.0%) were the main symptoms reported (Figure 2).
- In subjects suffering from hair loss, the main symptoms reported were low hair quality (87.2%) as well as scalp (85.6%) and hair greasiness (82.3%); (Figure 3).

• Quality of life

- The QoL was moderately to severely impacted in more than 50 % of the subjects (score ≥ 6).
- Almost 20% of the subjects frequently felt embarrassed and had a low self-esteem, with social activities being severely affected (i.e. clothes they wear and social/leisure activities).

• Knowledge about the condition(s)

- 42.2% of the subjects insufficiently paid attention to their scalp and hair and were not seeking for medical care.
- 82.1% of the subjects believed that their conditions were related to their lifestyle and emotional stress.
- 65.1% of the subjects believed that their scalp and hair conditions were the result of internal or external exposure to exposome factors (i.e. inappropriate use of cosmeceuticals, hormonal variations).
- 52.1% of the subjects believed that internal exposome factors such as hormonal variation trigger their condition.
- 10.4% of the subjects believed that their scalp and hair conditions were related to their skin disorder or to other diseases.

• Status quo and therapeutic needs

- 45.5% of the subjects were unaware about ingredients such as selenium disulfide and salicylic acid indicated in the management of seborrheic dermatitis.
- 42.6% of the subjects were unaware of emerging non-invasive or minimally invasive treatment options such as laser and micro-needling.
- 56.9% of the subjects wished to receive an efficient treatment that would include professional scalp and hair dermocosmetics.

• Willingness to spend time and financial resources

- 12.3% of the subjects were willing to spend more than 30 minutes per day on scalp and hair health-related treatment and care.
- Expenditure willingness was evenly distributed among 0-50, 50-500, 500-1000, and over 1000 RMB per month.

FIGURE 1: Overall Incidence of scalp and hair conditions

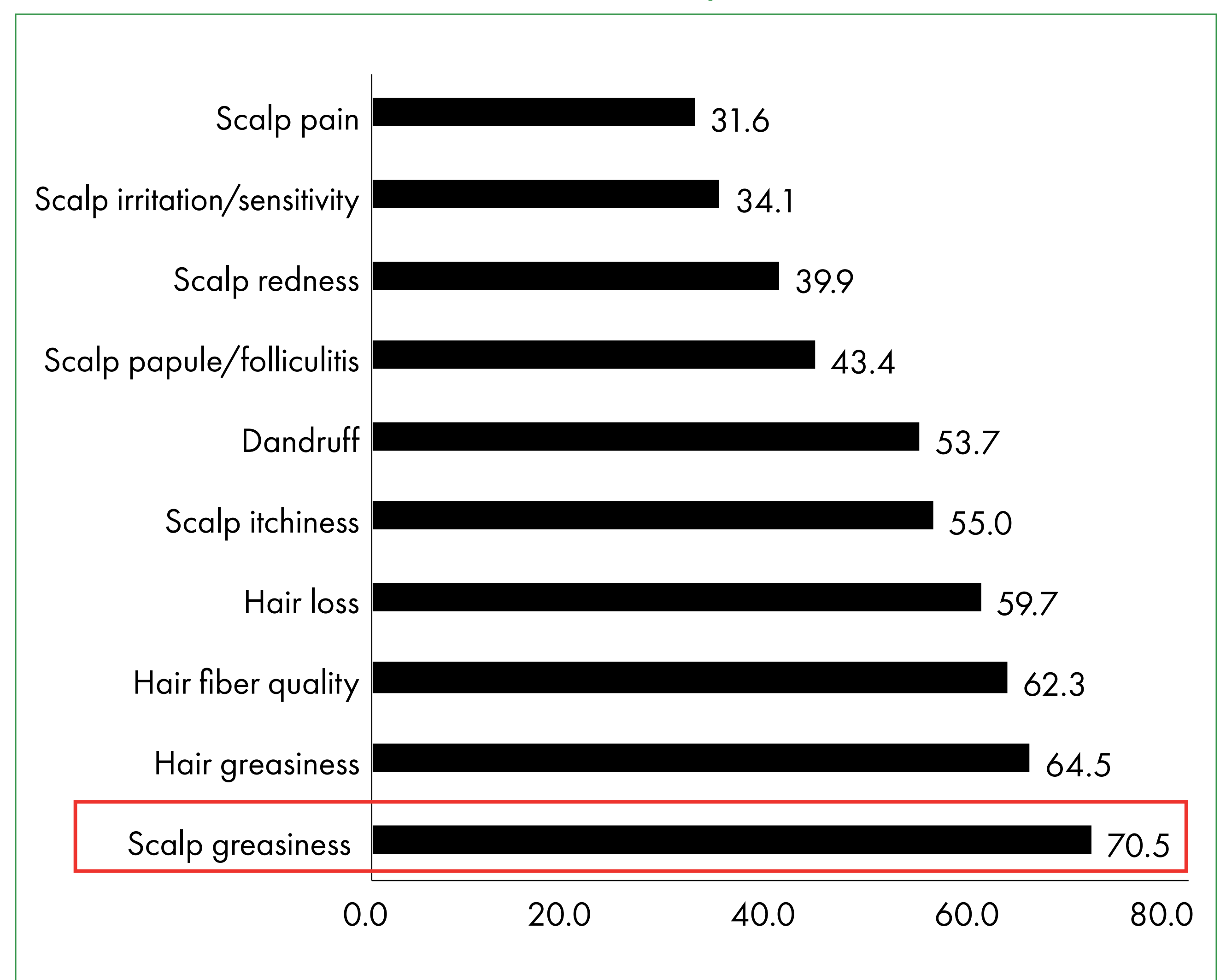


FIGURE 2: Incidence of scalp and hair conditions in subjects with dandruff

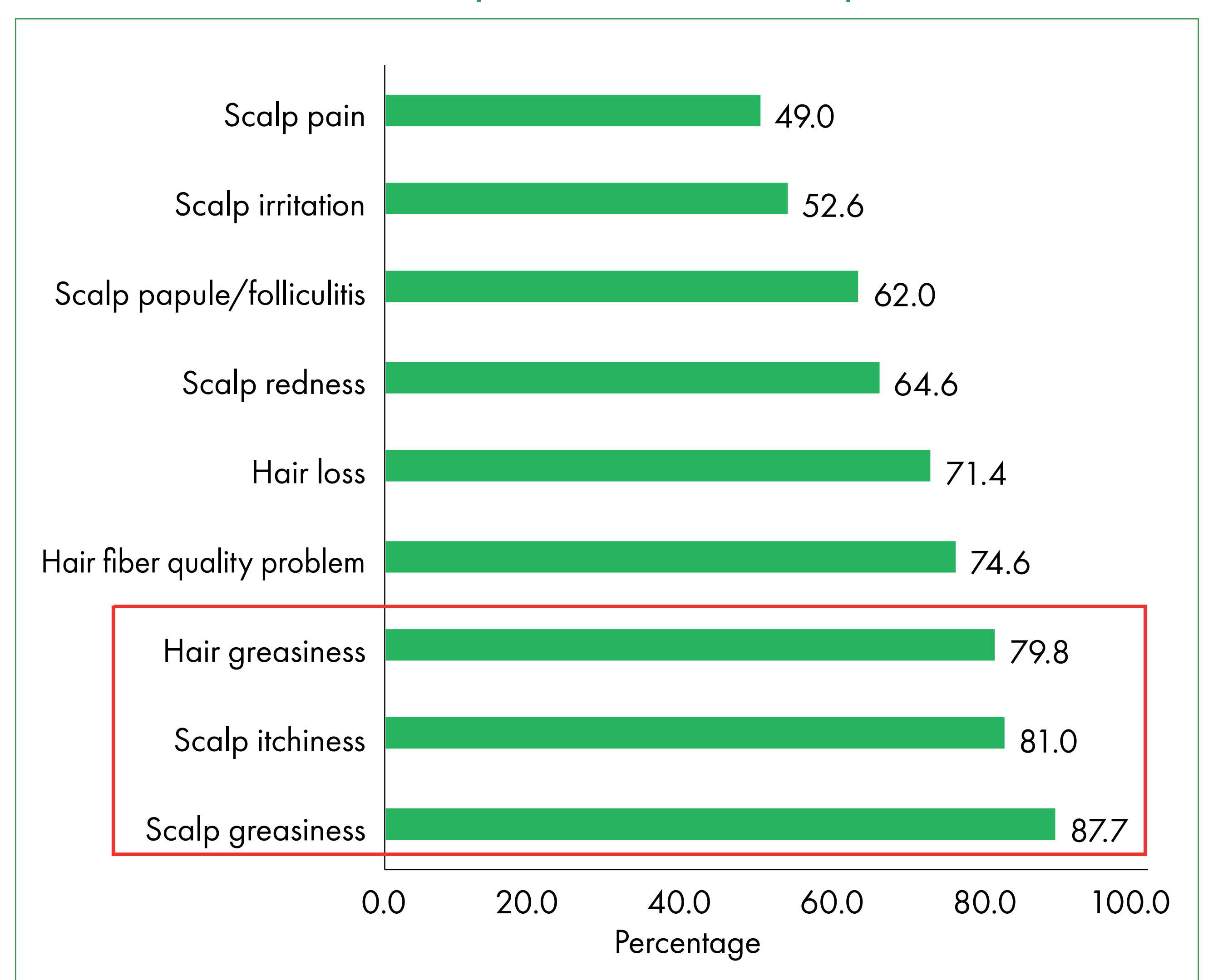
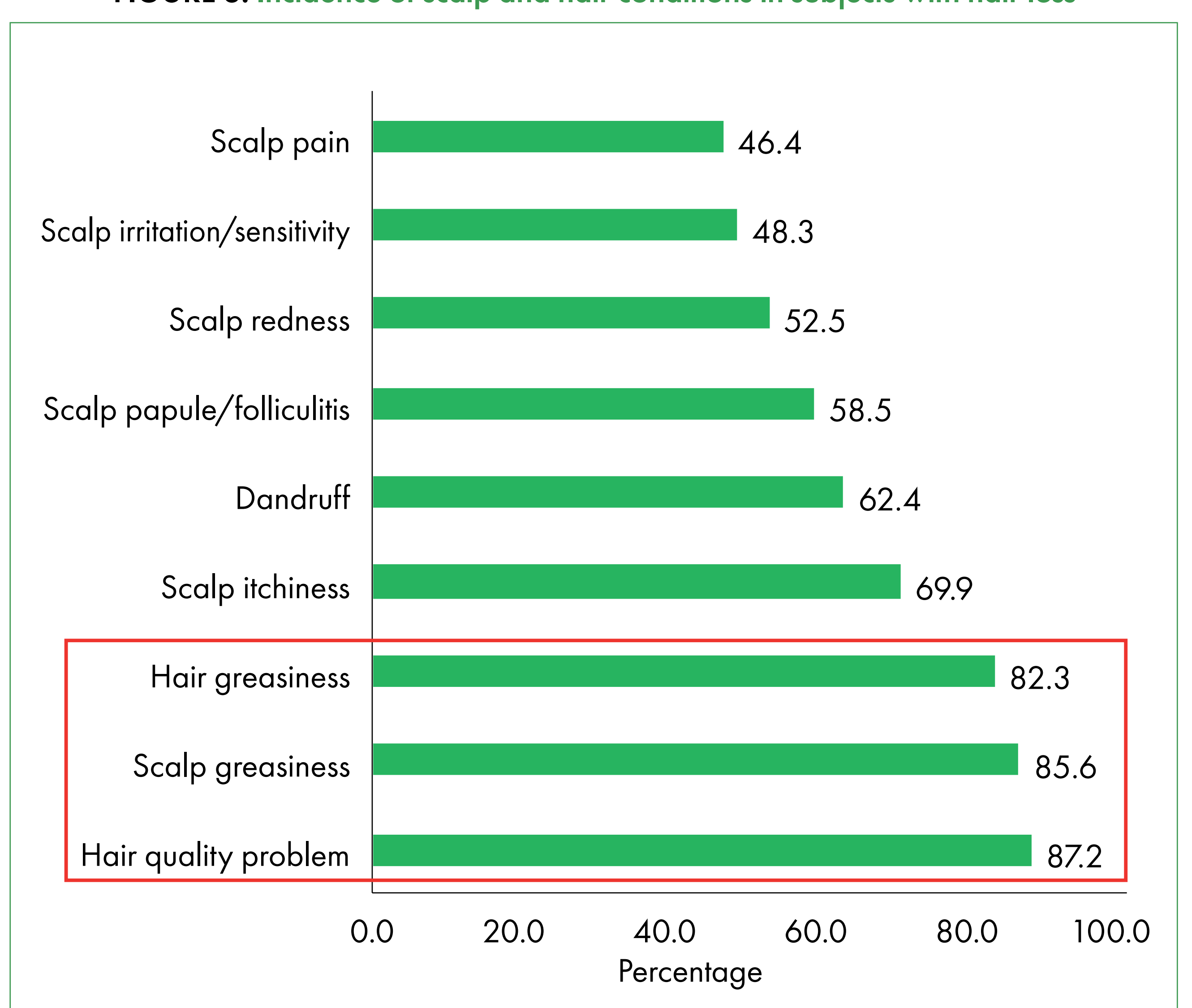


FIGURE 3: Incidence of scalp and hair conditions in subjects with hair loss



5 CONCLUSION

This study underlines a need to increase awareness about various scalp and hair symptoms in overall dermatologic patients, with considerable impact regarding the cause, consequences if left untreated, and new treatment options.

References: 1. Calavincenzo ML. Practice and Educational Gaps in Dermatology: Disorders of the Hair. *Dermatol Clin.* 2016;34(3):275-9. 2. Gelhorn HL, Cutts K, Edson-Heredia E, Wright P, Delozier A, Shapiro J, et al. The Relationship Between Patient-Reported Severity of Hair Loss and Health-Related Quality of Life and Treatment Patterns Among Patients with Alopecia Areata. *Dermatol Ther.* 2022;12(4):989-97. 3. Vano-Galvan S. Hair and scalp-related disorders are a trending topic in dermatology, with a significant increase in number of consultations in the last decade. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol.* 2023;37(1):16-7. 4. Finlay AY, Khan GK. Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI)—a simple practical measure for routine clinical use. *Clin Exp Dermatol.* 1994;19(3):210-6.

Acknowledgments: The authors acknowledge the writing support of Karl Patrick Göritz, SMWS, France. The authors acknowledge the writing support of Karl Patrick Göritz, SMWS, France and the art work of Dominique Poisson.

Key words: Scalp, hair, quality of life, selenium disulfide, salicylic acid, treatment