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INTRODUCTION

Acne is a very common skin condition, predominantly affecting adolescents and young adults of both sexes. Several studies have shown that acne affects adults as well. Few studies have considered the adult population. A study published in 2015¹ did not find any impact on sleep in young people with acne. In 2019, however, an American study based on a small sample concluded a relationship between acne and poor quality of sleep²

According to a study by “Santé Publique France” published in March 2019, French people sleep 6 hours and 42 minutes per night on average. This was the first time that daily sleep time fell below 7 hours, the minimum amount of time recommended for good recovery.

MATERIAL & METHODS

To assess sleep in adult acne sufferers, a digital questionnaire was administered to an adult population recruited via the Internet and whose acne was confirmed by a doctor. The severity was assessed by the patient according to an algorithm used in previous studies³. The Epworth questionnaire was used to assess daytime sleepiness and isolated questions were used to assess sleep quality.

RESULTS

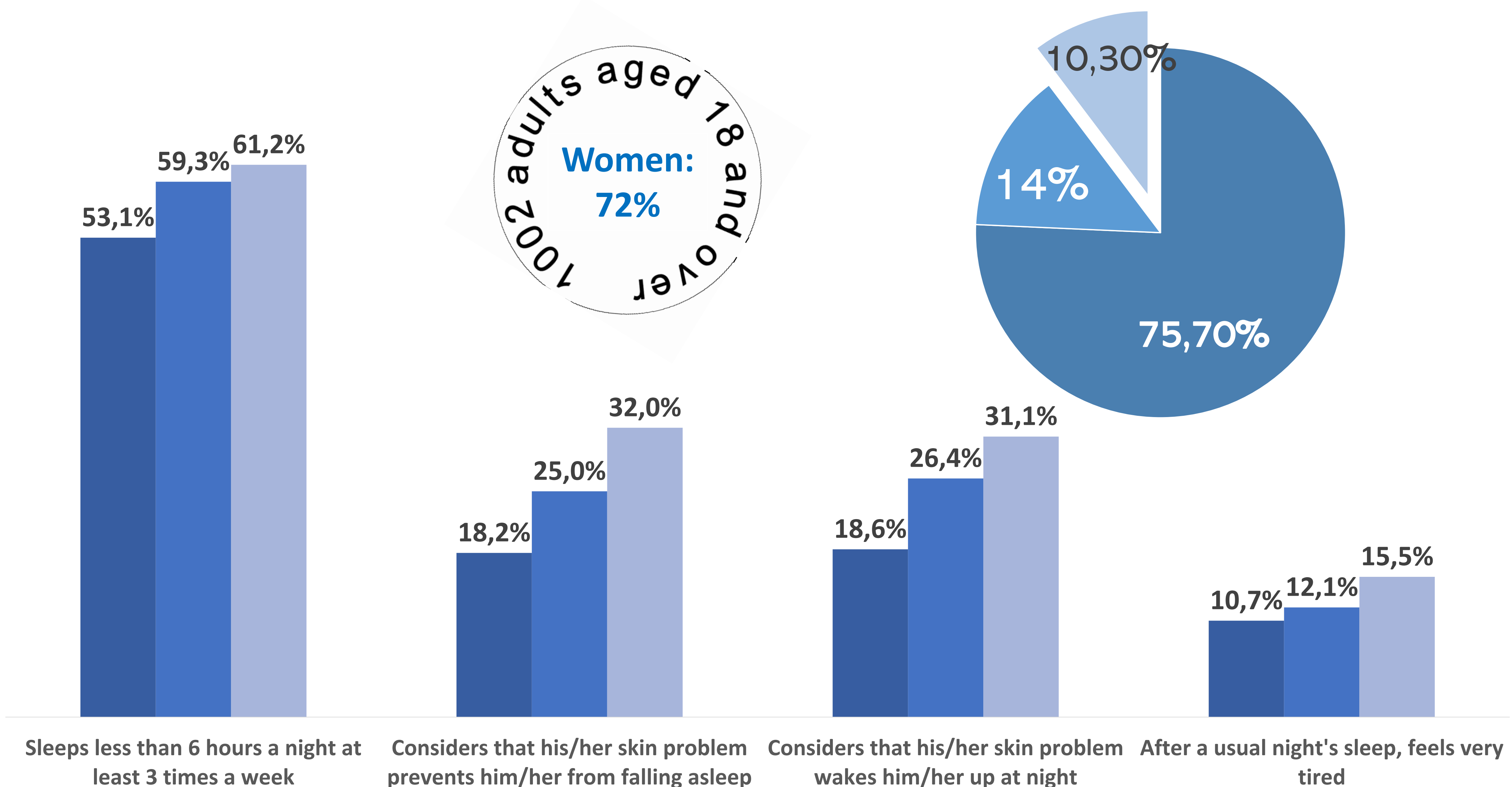
1002 adults aged 18 and over, sex ratio in favour of women [72%, n = 723], median age of 32 IQR [23, 41]. Severity was mild in 75.7% [n = 759], 14% identified severity as moderate [n = 140] and 10.3% identified it as severe [n = 103].

Median reported mean sleeping time was 6 hours 58 minutes IQR [6, 8], thereby 16 minutes longer than the national average. [7 hours for mild acne, 6 hours 55 minutes for moderate and 6 hours 47 minutes for severe].

Daytime sleepiness was normal for 56.3% [n=564], mild for 17.7% [n=177], moderate for 16.3% [n=163], severe for 9.8% [n=98]. This proportion was not significantly different between severity levels.

Taking more than 20 minutes to fall asleep during the previous week was present in 79% [n = 792], being awake with problems falling asleep again was present in 69.9% [n=700], sleeping less than 6 hours three times during the previous week was present in 54.8% [n=549]. After a night of sleep, 41.5% [n=416] felt well rested, 47.1% [n=472] felt a bit tired and, finally, 11.4% [n = 114] felt really tired. None of these were significantly different between severity levels.

When asked specifically about the impact of their skin disease on sleep, acne preventing sleep was reported by 18.2% [n = 138] of mild acne patients, by 25% [n = 35] of moderate acne patients and by 32% [n = 33] (p=0.002) of severe acne patients. Being woken by the disease was reported by 18.6% [n = 141] of mild acne patients, by 26.4% [n = 37] of moderate acne patients and 31.1% [n = 32] (p=0.004) of severe acne patients.



DISCUSSION

We have demonstrated that adult acne is associated with sleep issues. Patients did not report different levels of sleep issues depending on severity levels but, when asked specifically about the effect of their skin on sleep, more than 30% of severe patients reported being woken or prevented from sleeping because of their skin disease, thereby demonstrating a difference between severity levels. Our results confirm a recently published study (4), which reported significantly more (p<0.001) individuals with acne (54.6%) than without (47.6%) who reported lacking sleep and significantly more (p<0.001) individuals without acne (52.4%) than those with acne (50.3%) who reported restful sleep.

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