

According to NTU research, 34% of eczema apps do not meet global standards or guidelines

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A recent study by Nanyang Technological University (NTU) found that nearly 34 percent of mobile eczema applications deliver information that does not conform to international guidelines and general therapies.

It should be noted that many of the apps examined feature information on available therapies and on disease tracking function. However, the research team led by Associate Professor Josip Car of the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKC Medicine) at NTU Singapore has noted a tremendous variation in the quality of apps available worldwide.

According to the study, these apps do not meet the full criteria for educational information, tracking capabilities, or health information policies that are reflected in international recommendations for eczema management, such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines and guidelines for health care. The management of atopic dermatitis are set in Singapore.

The research highlighted the need for mechanisms and guidelines to ensure the quality of such applications and enable personalized app selection for patients, caregivers, and physicians. According to the team, this is important for long-term conditions such as eczema, which involve various types of skin swelling.

What is to know about eczema?

Symptoms:**Dry, sensitive skin**

- **Red, inflamed skin**
- **Excessive itching**
- **Dark skin spots**
- **Rough, leathery or scaly patches of skin**
- **Swelling or crusting**

Treatment:

There is no cure for eczema, but there are treatments. Depending on the age of the individual and the severity of the eczema, these treatments may include over-the-counter medicines, prescription topical medications, phototherapy, immunosuppressants, and biological medications.

Associate Professor Josip Car, Healthcare Chair NTU's Service and Results Research Program, LKCMedicine, stated that the mobile health sector can lead to better care and self-management of these skin diseases. He also mentioned that these apps have turned out to be a novel approach to support the self-administration conditions that are needed in cases with eczema.

Prof. Car added that these studies have shown that "there is a large variance in the quality of eczema apps." While the assessed eczema self-administration apps had shortcomings, certain apps provided adequate features with accurate information and comprehensive follow-up of atopic dermatitis factors. "

According to Matthew Gass of the British Association of Dermatologists, it's important to examine these apps to test their accuracy and safety, as there are many similar apps that are inaccurate and unsafe.

For this study, the NTU-led research team evaluated 98 apps for the treatment of eczema, including 67 in English, 22 in Chinese and 9 in Spanish.

The team evaluated these apps against international eczema guidelines from Singapore, the United Kingdom, the United States, China, and Argentina to evaluate education information. In a press release, NTU stated that 84 percent of the apps called provided educational information, 39 percent tracking, and 13 percent both showed.

While 82% of 38 apps with tracking feature measured certain symptoms, disease severity, or current skin condition, 89% helped users track drug use, including the use of topical treatments and 34% of registered environmental or dietary allergens ,

It should be noted that 34 percent of apps provide information that does not comply with international guidelines, but 15 percent contain information that is supported by the International Pharmacological Therapies Guidelines and 16 percent by non-pharmacological therapies. Even 11 percent of the apps did not mention major therapies like the use of softeners and moisturizers.

Following this discovery, Prof Car said, "Perhaps the most useful way to address this issue would be to publish a list of recommended therapies apps that clinicians can use to suggest appropriate options for eczema patients and caregivers."

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