

Who will scratch the patient?

Hastayı kim kaşıyacak?

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The urge to scratch is one of the basic needs of individuals in daily life. Itching sensation occurs as a result of the activity of special nerve cells in the epidermis and dermal-epidermal junction points. Itching is transmitted to the brain by a special subset of nociceptive C neurons (1, 2). Studies have shown that itching occurs with atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, Chronic Renal Failure, haematological diseases and psychological factors and it can cause skin wounds, and infections (2-4). For this reason, antihistamines, emollients, neutral or mild pH soap, natural products, alternative therapies, topical corticosteroids, and local anaesthetics, etc. are recommended for patients to reduce itching and to maintain the feeling of comfort (4). Although these methods reduce the itching of the patient, in some cases itching may occur due to psychological or undetected allergens, and it may be necessary to satisfy the itching sensation by maintaining the skin integrity of the patient. The individual is trying to reduce his/her stress by itching. On the other hand, when stress increases, the feeling of itching increases. For this reason, there may be decreased in the comfort of patients who cannot meet the urge to scratch. It is clear that patients who cannot take care of themselves, who are bedridden, who are sedated, and who receive intensive care treatment will have difficulty meeting even their ordinary daily scratching needs. Especially intensive care patients are hesitant to act due to pain, fear, monitoring, and the presence of many medical tools and equipment on them. There may be a feeling of itching in the places where medical equipment touches the patient's skin, but most of the time, patients cannot satisfy this urge to scratch. It could not find any information about who will scratch the patients who are not self-sufficient or who do not have a companion. There are only treatment and care recommendations regarding itching in the literature. In reality, the ordinary need for daily scratching is ignored when giving holistic care to the patient. For this reason, it may be recommended to realize the needs of patients who have difficulty in scratching themselves and to make plans for eliminating the need for scratching in patient care. Thus, satisfying the need for scratching can contribute to patients' physical and psychological well-being.

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