

The psychosocial impact of chronic hand eczema – findings from the population-based CHECK (Chronic Hand Eczema epidemiology, Care, and Knowledge of real-life burden) study

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Objectives

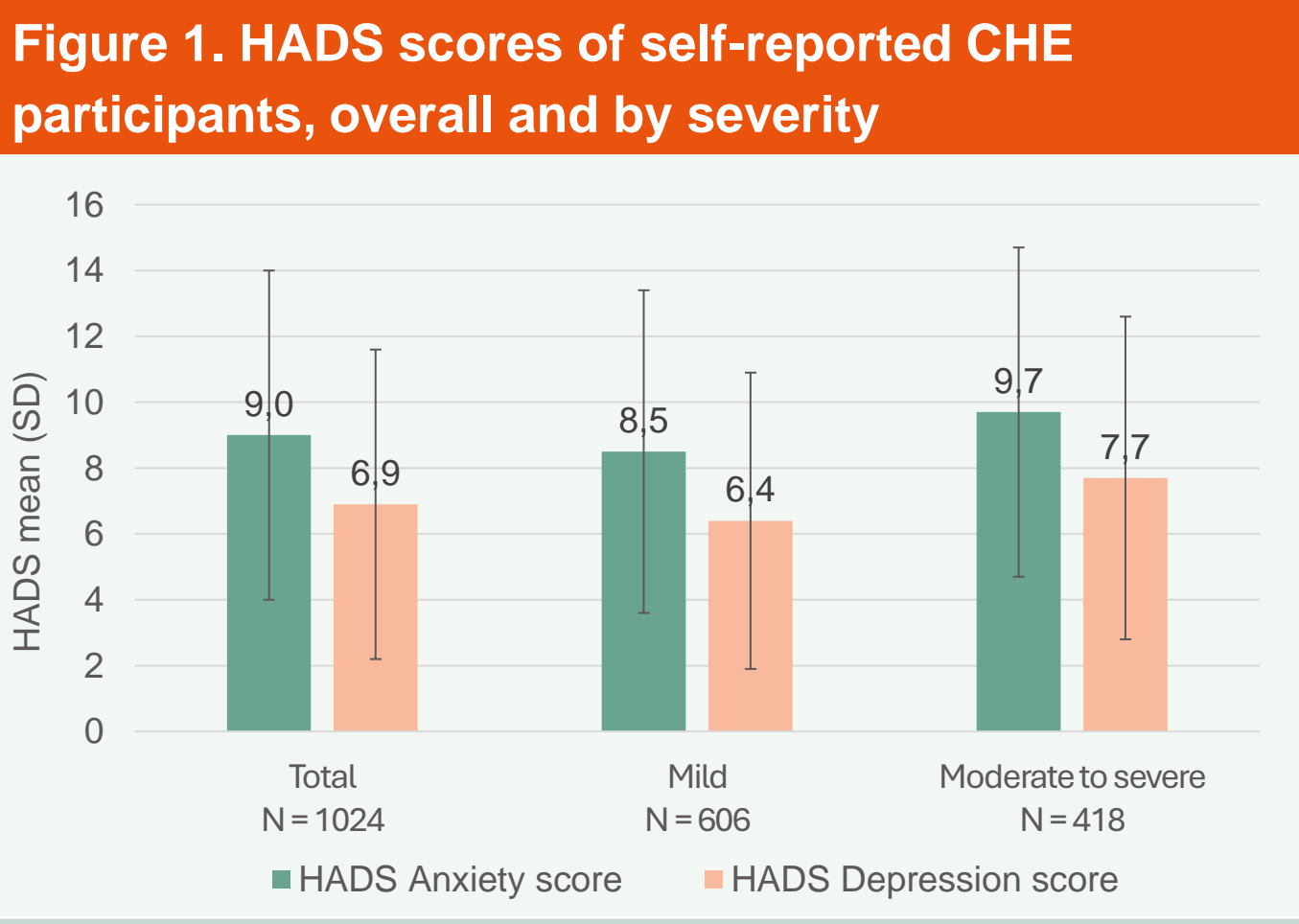
- To describe the broader effects of CHE on psychosocial health in terms of impact on interpersonal contact and the characteristics of anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation among patients with mild and moderate to severe CHE.

Results

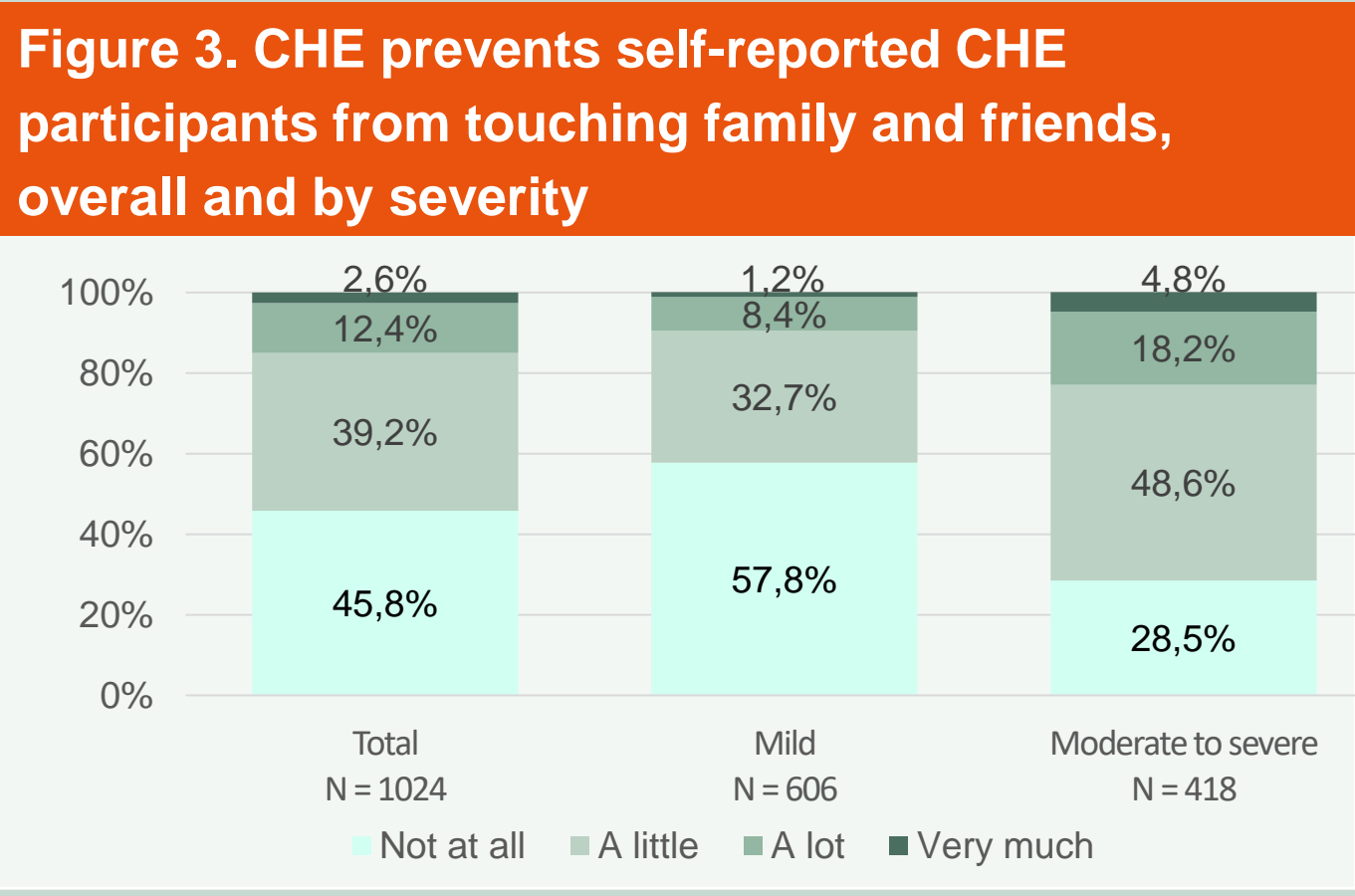
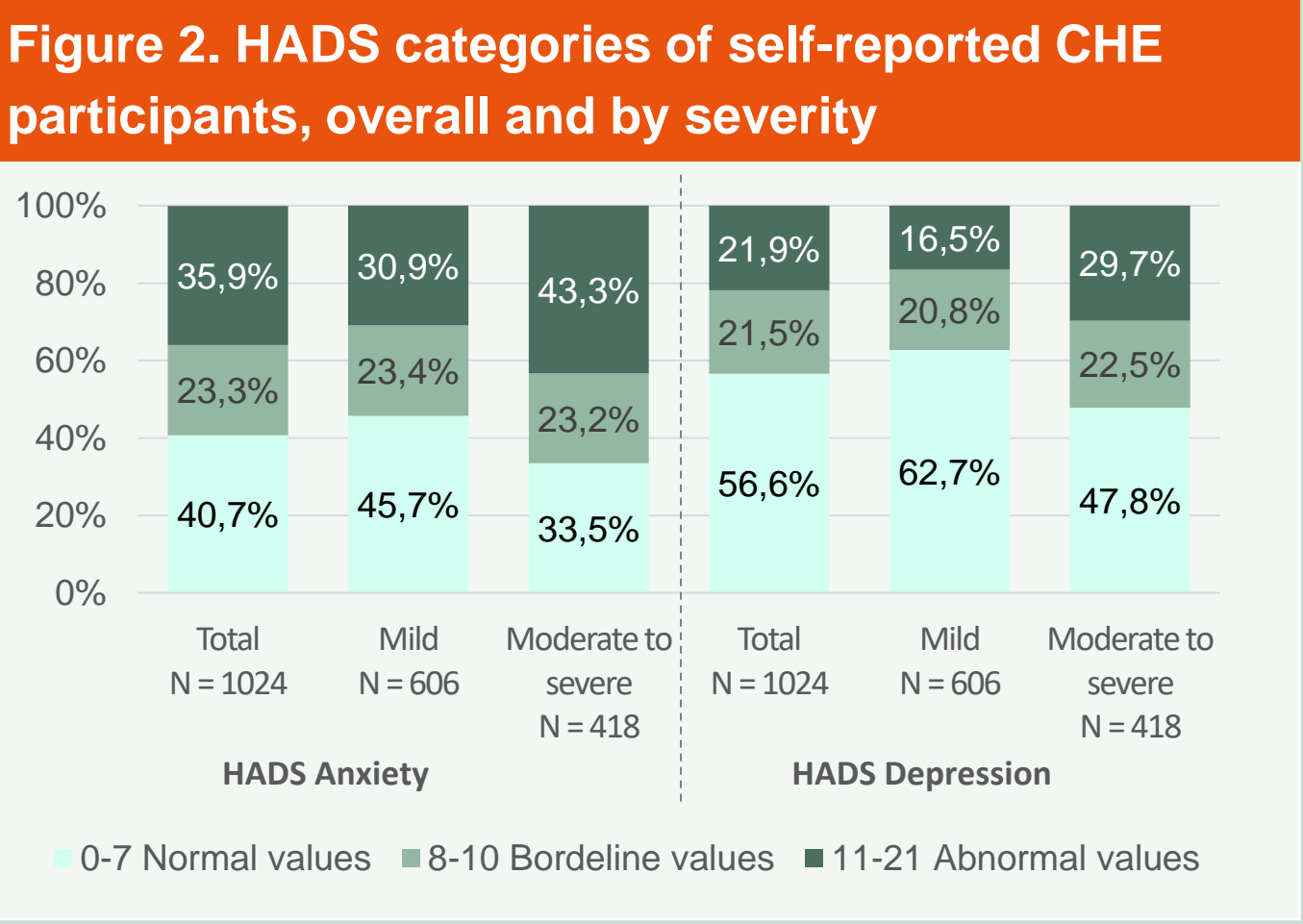
- In total, 1,024 participants with CHE completed the questionnaire, out of which 40.8% (n=418) reported moderate to severe CHE.
- No major differences were observed in sample characteristics between participants with mild and moderate to severe CHE (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Self-reported CHE participants characteristics, overall and by severity			
	Total	Mild	Moderate to severe
N	1,024	606	418
Age, mean (SD)	45.9 (11.8)	46.2 (12.5)	45.4 (10.8)
Sex			
Female, n (%)	723 (70.6%)	447 (73.8%)	276 (66.0%)
Male, n (%)	301 (29.4%)	159 (26.2%)	142 (34.0%)
Time since diagnosis			
N	854	486	368
Mean (SD)	17.3 (14.7)	17.1 (14.8)	17.7 (14.5)
Country			
Canada, n (%)	168 (16.4%)	104 (17.2%)	64 (15.3%)
France, n (%)	166 (16.2%)	90 (14.9%)	76 (18.2%)
Germany, n (%)	113 (11.0%)	55 (9.1%)	58 (13.9%)
Italy, n (%)	184 (18.0%)	96 (15.8%)	88 (21.1%)
Spain, n (%)	190 (18.6%)	142 (23.4%)	48 (11.5%)
UK, n (%)	203 (19.8%)	119 (19.6%)	84 (20.1%)

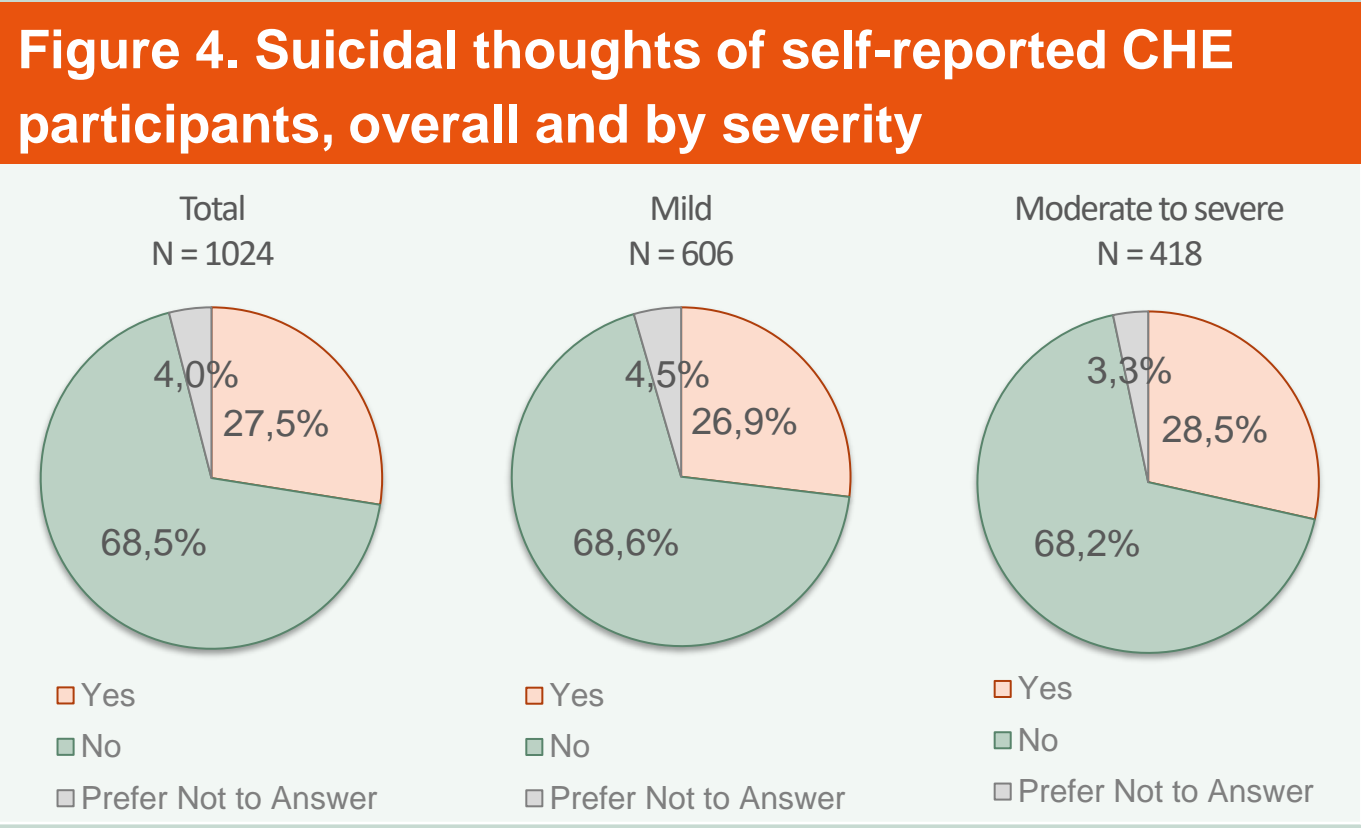
- The mean (SD) HADS-A and HADS-D scores were higher for participants with moderate to severe CHE, compared to those with mild CHE (**Figure 1**).
- More than half, 54.2% reported that their CHE prevented them from touching their partner, children or any of their close friends or relatives in the past 6 months, including 15.0% who were prevented from touching them “a lot” or “very much”.



- Two thirds (66.5%) among those with moderate to severe CHE, indicated anxiety levels above the normal range (8-21), and more than half (52.2%) indicated above normal levels for depression.
- Those percentages were lower among the participants with mild CHE; 54.3% and 37.3% for anxiety and depression, respectively (**Figure 2**).
- This was more pronounced in patients with moderate to severe CHE (23.0%) than in patients with mild CHE (9.6%) (**Figure 3**).



- Close to one in three participants (27.5%) had ever had suicidal thoughts indicating a significant mental burden associated with living with CHE.
- Only minor differences were observed between mild versus moderate to severe participants (**Figure 4**).



Conclusions

- These results highlight the negative impact of CHE on patients’ physical contact with their partner, children or any of their close friends or relatives, along with severe consequences for their mental well-being.
- Two thirds of people with moderate to severe CHE, indicated anxiety levels above the normal range, and more than half indicated above normal levels for depression.
- This underscores the need for targeted psychosocial interventions and improved treatment options for patients with CHE. By addressing both the physical and emotional aspects of the condition, patients’ quality of life can be enhanced, helping them to reconnect with their families and communities.

Background

- Chronic hand eczema (CHE) is a chronic inflammatory disease with high prevalence¹.
- According to the definition of the European Society of Contact Dermatitis (ESCD), CHE is hand eczema that lasts ≥ 3 months or relapses ≥ 2 times a year².
- This common skin disease is associated with a significant impairment of patient’s health related quality of life, including a notable impact on their mental health.
- Previous research suggest that the lack of intimate touch contact further exacerbates mental health issues³.
- Real-world evidence on psychological impact in individuals with CHE is limited, especially in a cohort ranging from mild to very severe disease.
- Previous research is often limited to patient cohorts recruited in hospital settings^{4,5,6,7} and either restricted to single-country studies in CHE patients^{5,6,7} or to more global studies but in hand eczema patients⁴.
- So far, no multi-national studies have investigated the potential suicidal ideation in CHE patients.

Methods

- CHECK (Chronic Hand Eczema epidemiology, Care, and Knowledge of real-life burden) is a population-based survey.
- Adults aged 18 to 69 were recruited in 2023-2024 via online panels in Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK.
- Participants who self-reported CHE were included in the analyses.
- Outcomes included:
 - Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS-A & HADS-D), which includes seven questions for each score. HADS-A and HADS-D range from 0 to 21. (Higher scores = greater anxiety or depression).
 - A previously published photographic guide⁸ to assess the severity of CHE during the past week (*‘Clear’* and *‘Almost clear’* was categorized as ‘Mild’ and *‘Moderate’*, *‘Severe’* and *‘Very severe’* was categorized as the ‘Moderate to Severe’).
 - Ever having suicidal thoughts.
 - If their hand eczema prevented from touching their partner, children or any of their close friends or relatives.

- Data were analysed descriptively as mean with standard deviation (SD) for continuous variables, and frequencies (n) and percentages for categorical variables.

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Disclosures

A.B. has had ad hoc consultancy/travel/lecturing agreements with AbbVie, Almirall, BMS, Galderma, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, LEO Pharma, Lilly, MSD, Novartis, Pfizer, Sanofi and UCB.

S.M. has received honoraria or grants from Abbvie, Almirall, Aralez, Arcutis, Basilea, Bausch and Lomb, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Bristol Myer Squibb, Evidera, Galderma, GSK, Incyte, Jamp Biopharma, LEO Pharma, Lilly, Novartis, Pfizer, Sanofi, Sun Pharma and UCB. She is currently investigator for Novartis and LEO Pharma.

M.N.C. has been a consultant, advisory board member, investigator, and/or speaker for AbbVie, LEO Pharma, Pfizer, and Sanofi Genzyme.

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