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DERMATOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF GLP-1 RECEPTOR AGONISTS: AAD DENVER 2026 SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

- GLP-1 receptor agonists (semaglutide, tirzepatide, liraglutide) are undergoing unprecedented therapeutic expansion. The 2026 AAD in Denver devoted a dedicated session to them ("Metabolic Revolution") and presented the first Phase 3b trial combining a GLP-1 agonist (tirzepatide) with a biologic in psoriatic arthritis (TOGETHER-PsA, Merola et al.).

- Meanwhile, 5.75% of adverse effects reported with arGLP-1 are cutaneous, with probable under-reporting (Fat MN et al., JDD, 2026). This study documents the blind spot of this revolution: cutaneous adverse effects in real-world settings.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Self-administered questionnaire distributed at the AAD 2026 (Denver, 25–30 March 2026). N = 73 US dermatologists.

Variables: practice setting, years of experience, volume of patients on GLP-1 receptor agonists, observed cutaneous effects, molecular causality score vs. weight loss (0–10), medical recognition, priority actions.

RESULTS

75% have over 20 years' experience; 68% practise in private practice; 45% see > 15 patients/month on GLP-1 agonists. 90.3% have observed skin effects (58.3% occasionally, 20.8% frequently). The three predominant effects: telogen effluvium (58.9%), xerosis (42.5%), nail changes (27.4%).

A positive spontaneous signal emerges : improvement in hidradenitis suppurativa. Median imputability score = 5/10 (mean 4.6 ± 2.4), reflecting uncertainty between the direct effect of the drug and the consequences of weight loss. 54.7% of respondents with an opinion consider these effects to be underestimated or only partially recognized.

Priorities: informing patients prior to treatment (n = 40) and developing official follow-up guidelines (n = 27).

CONCLUSIONS

These data do not contradict the results presented at the AAD 2026 — they highlight a blind spot in those findings. Whilst TOGETHER-PsA demonstrates the therapeutic benefit of arGLP-1s in inflammatory skin diseases, our survey reveals real-world cutaneous adverse effects in a general patient population.

The divergence of the TOGETHER-PsA curves as early as week 4 (before any weight loss) suggests a direct effect of the molecule, which is precisely what our median score of 5/10 reflects. Telogen effluvium, xerosis and nail changes are the three priority signals to be incorporated into future guidelines. Patient information and official follow-up recommendations are the most urgent actions.

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