Epidemiologic study on fragile skin in Hong-Kong, focus on environmental factors

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INTRODUCTION

Hong-Kong population is very homogenous containing a majority (98.2%) of inhabitants of Asian ethnicity. Pollution and stressful environment influence the status of different skin categories and can cause fragility of epidermis.This epidemiologic study was set up to assess the prevalence of perceived « Fragile skin » across different skin types in a general adult population in Hong Kong and to identify skin characteristics associated with perceived fragile skin.

METHODOLOGY & THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

A cross-sectional subject survey was conducted in Hong Kong in November 2018 by CSA Health Institute

Subjects

A representative sample of 606 adult individuals with a mean age of 40.2 years old and a sex ratio of 1/1 was included.

This online questionnaire, based on quota method on gender, age and geographical regions, was self-administered.

Quesionnaire's topics

- Socio-demographics
- Skin type
- Skin characteristics
- Skin symptoms
- Skin diseases
- Dermatological acts
- Environment & climat
- Perception of Fragile skin

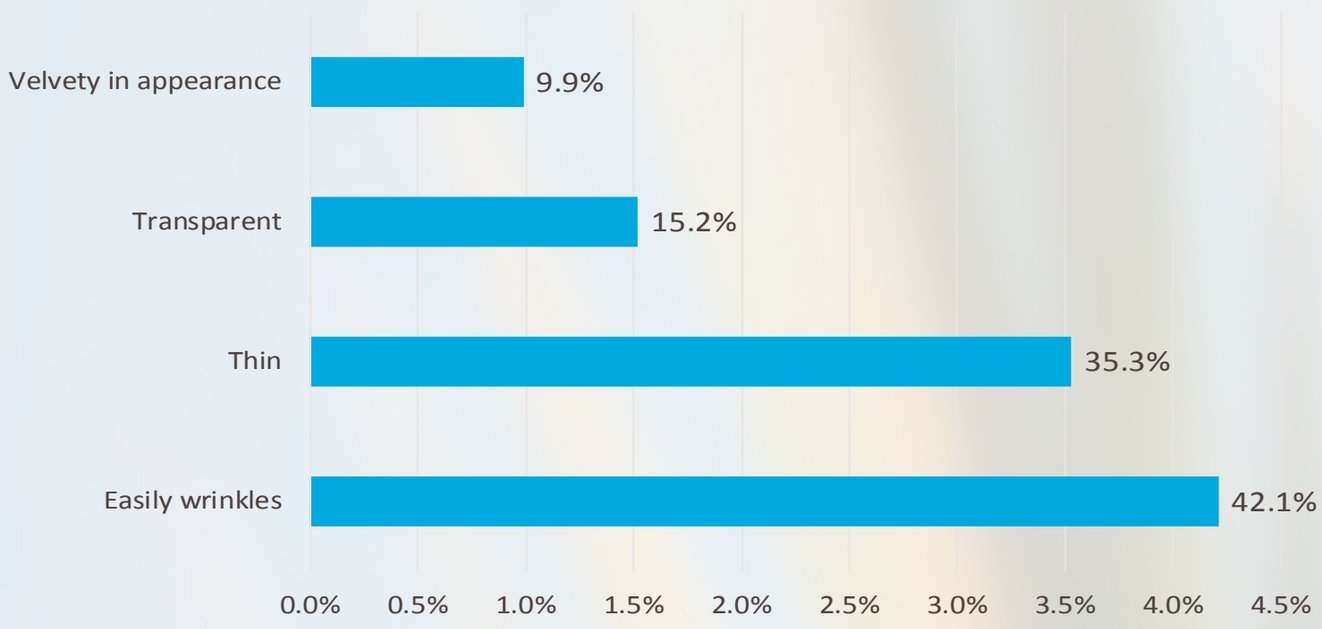
Descriptive statistics

- Overall population
- Analysis by gender
- Analysis by age category
- Analysis by perceived fragile skin

Statistical tests

- Comparison between groups using Pearson Chi-square or Fischer's exact tests : qualitative variables
- Proportion of perceived fragile skin is based on question Q6* and the 95% CI** is calculated using the Clopper-Pearson method.

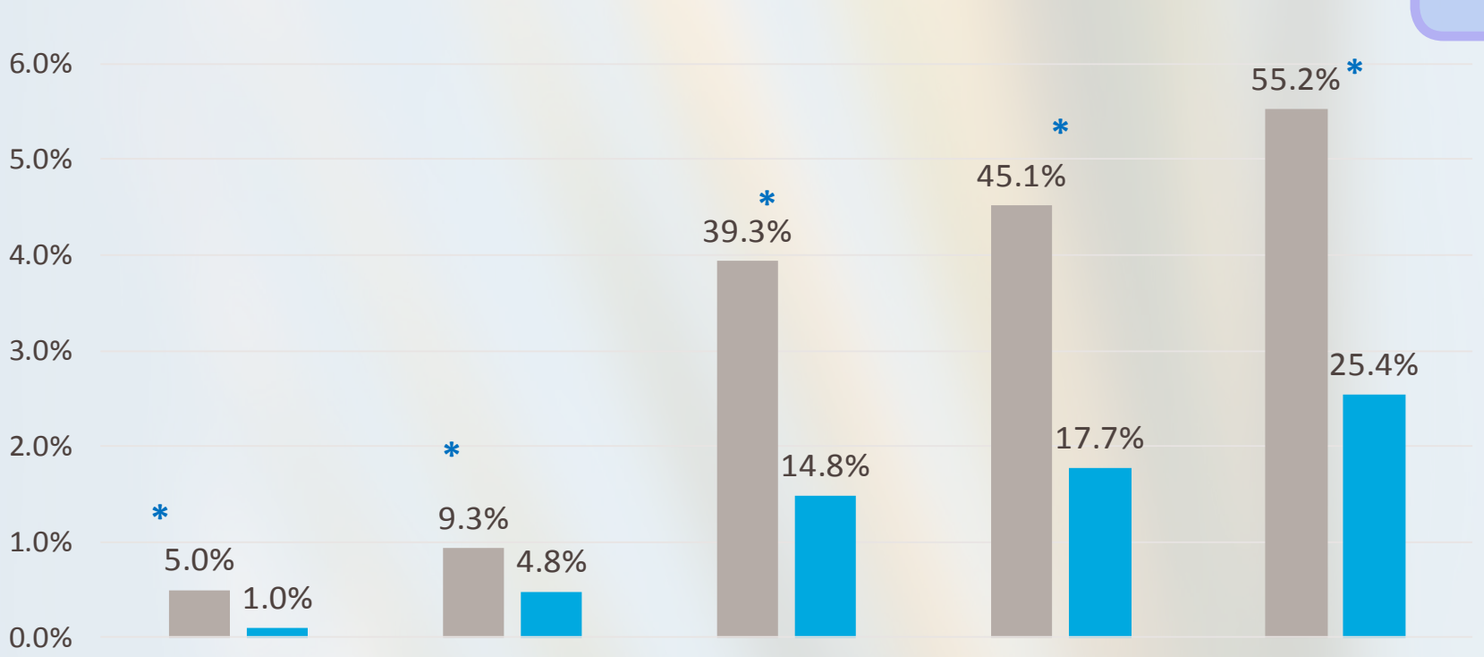
FINDINGS



Subjects:

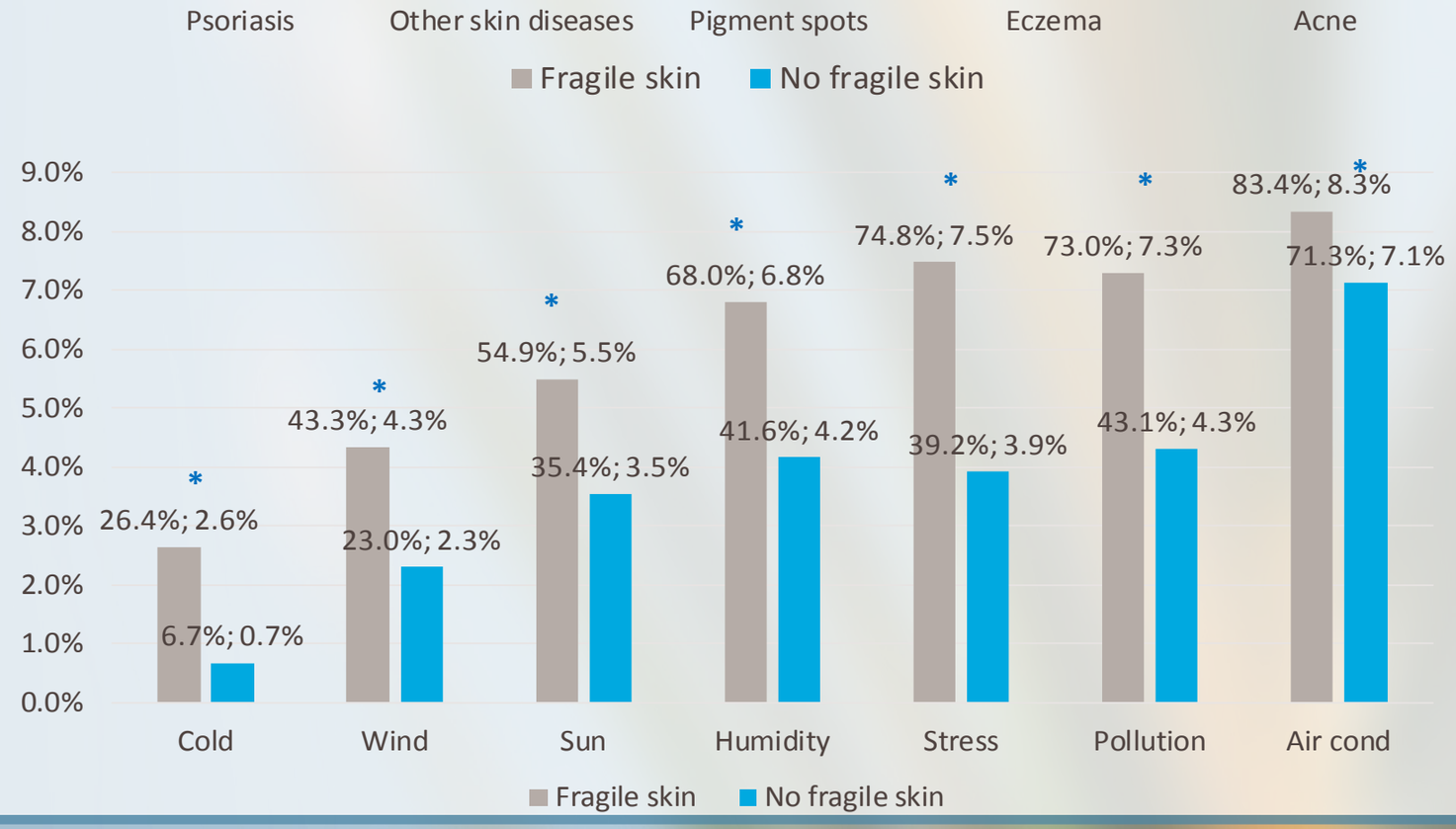
- **42.1%** reported having easily wrinkled skin
- **35.3%** reported having a thin skin aspect

Prevalence of fragile skin was 65.5% (95%, CI 61.6%; 69.3%), more declared by female (70%, p=0,001)



Subjects with fragile skin → more prone to skin diseases:

- acne **55.2% vs 25.4%** (non fragile)
- eczema **45.1% vs 17.7%** (non fragile)



Subjects with fragile skin → better perception of their environment:

- polluted environment **73% vs 43.1%** (non fragile)
- stressful **75% vs 39.2%** (non fragile)

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of perceived fragile skin in Hong-Kong inhabitants is one of the highest in the world. Pollution and stress are most frequently indicated factor leading to fragility of epidermis (62.7% and 62.5% respectively).

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