SUN PROTECTION AND SUN EXPOSURE HABITS OF SENSITIVE SKIN INDIVIDUALS

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INTRODUCTION

A consensual definition of sensitive skin has been recently established by the International Forum for the Study of Itch (IFSI) through the IFSI special interest group (SIG) on sensitive skin. Sensitive skin is a syndrome defined by the occurrence of unpleasant sensations (stinging, burning, pain, pruritus and tingling) in response to stimuli that normally should not induce such reactions. This condition can be triggered by cosmetic compounds, water, environmental conditions (e.g. ultraviolet light, variations of temperature, pollution or wind) and psychological or hormonal factors. Little is known about sun exposure and sun protection behaviours of sensitive skin individuals.

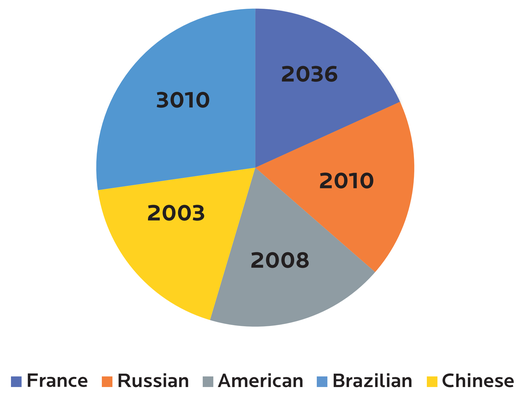
OBJECTIVE

This study investigates the sun exposure and sun protective habits of sensitive skin individuals.

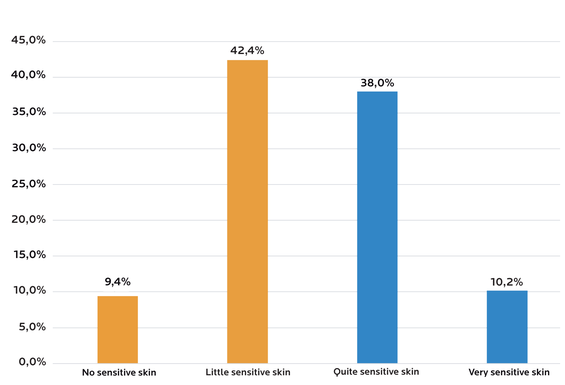
METHODS

Population-based study using a representative sample of the general population aged ≥18 years from five countries (Brazil, China, Russia and United States and France). All participants were asked to fill in a digital structured questionnaire. We collected data about socio-demographics, lifestyle, sun exposure and protection habits and severity of skin sensitivity.

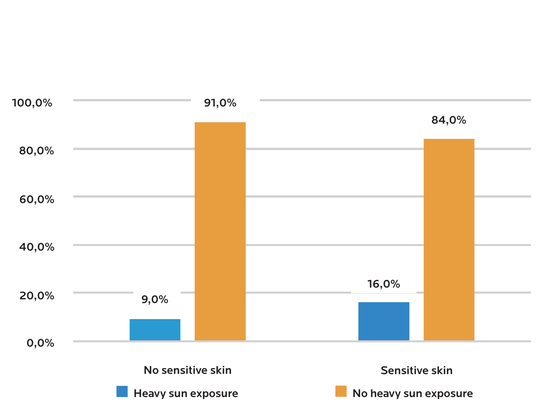
RESULTS



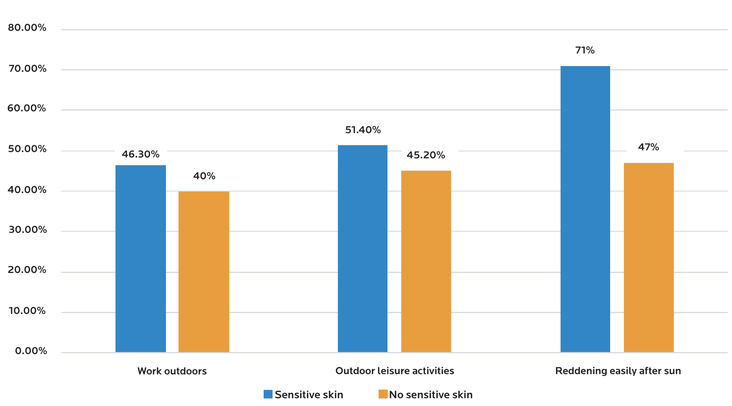
A total of 11067 adult participants responded to the questionnaire.
(2003 Brazilian, 3010 Chinese, 2036 French, 2010 Russian and 2008 American).



48.2% of patients reported a sensitive skin condition (38% “quite sensitive” and 10.2% “very sensitive”) with a non-response rate of 3%.



Individuals with sensitive skin declares more heavy sun exposure lifestyle compared to no sensitive skin individuals (16% vs 9%, OR=1.9, p<0.0001).



The over exposure to the sun probably explains why individuals with sensitive skin report greater use of sun protection compared to no sensitive skin individuals (87% vs 78%, OR 1.9, p<0.0001). This difference is also observed when they work outdoors (46.3% vs 40%) or during outdoor leisure activities (51.4% vs 45.2%). Sensitive skin individuals report more reddening easily after sun exposure (71% vs 47 %, OR 2.76, p<0.001). They are also more likely to buy sun protection in pharmacies (37% vs 34%, OR 1.2, p<0.001).

CONCLUSION

This is the largest population-based study aiming to estimate sun exposure and protection use of sensitive skin individuals. The results suggest that sun exposure and skin sensitivity are linked, more investigation, in a longitudinal perspective, is needed to establish causality.