

— Editorial

THE DEPARTMENT OF IMAGING IN DERMATOLOGY

As of this year, we observe with interest and, at the same time, concern that diagnosis through lesion visualization, which often allowed a detailed description of the process and was performed by visual examination with the aid of a magnifying glass, identified elementary lesions that, together with the patient's medical history, led to one or several presumptive diagnoses. Today, it is evident that this methodology has fallen short.

However, dermatologists have sought new systems in an effort to see beyond what the eye or a magnifying lens could reveal at that time. If we think that these advancements happened recently, we are mistaken, as one of these diagnostic imaging techniques, dermoscopy, was implemented by Peter Borrelus in 1655, and later Johann Saphier named it "dermatoscopy" in 1920. Currently, imaging techniques in dermatology have expanded, and alongside dermoscopy, skin ultrasound, reflectance confocal microscopy, and optical coherence tomography are now used. These advances have greatly enhanced the ability to examine a patient's skin, providing valuable support for clinical assessment, histopathological examination, and even aesthetic procedures.

Thus, I pose several questions given the growing use of imaging techniques in our specialty:

1. Is it necessary to incorporate the study of these diagnostic methods into dermatology postgraduate programs?
2. Would it be beneficial to establish a subspecialty as a dermatology imaging specialist?
3. Should an imaging department be part of an integral dermatology center?

I believe dermatologists cannot and should not exclude themselves from, at minimum, a basic knowledge of these fields. This would enable them, even if they do not perform the techniques themselves, to at least request and interpret them. Let us remember that many argue that the dermatoscope should be a mandatory diagnostic tool for dermatologists, just as the stethoscope is for general practitioners and other specialists.

However, the proliferation of diagnostic methods and the advent of the so-called artificial intelligence lead us to the considerable risk of reading less each day, imagining little, investigating minimally, and complacently surrendering ourselves to technological advances. Therefore, I turn to the wisdom of the Hindu philosopher who said: *"Human intelligence has worked so hard to create technologies that make life easier and prevent it from having to think or act, without realizing that this now-dependent intelligence may gradually fall asleep, perhaps into an eternal slumber."*

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