TERRA FIRMA-FORME DERMATOSIS: A CASE REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Skin lesion is usually an important cosmetic concern of the patient. In the present clinical case report, the authors present an example of little mentioned dermatological condition namely Terra firma-forme dermatosis. The presentation of this condition is the hyperpigmentation of the skin. The exact underlying condition of this specific dermatological problem is not well clarified.

Keywords: Terra firma-forme dermatosis, hyperpigmentation, skin

INTRODUCTION

Skin is the coverage of human beings. The good dermatological appearance is an important aesthetic consideration. Skin lesion is usually an important cosmetic concern of the patient. In the present clinical case report, the authors present an example of little mentioned dermatological condition namely . The presentation of this condition is the hyperpigmentation of the skin. The exact underlying condition of this specific dermatological problem is not well clarified.

CASE REPORT

The patient is a 59 years old male patient presenting to the physician with a chief complaint of black skin at back. The patient noted that he had observed this dermatological lesion for 2 months. He noted that he firstly felt itching at his back and he performed self-medication by several over-the-counter drugs. He gave history of no personal illness.

On physical examination, the dark skin lesion could be detected at the back of this patient. The appearance of the lesion is a flat skin lesion with hyperpigmentation as shown in the Figure 1.
Figure 1. The skin lesion of the patient.
DISCUSSION

Terra firma-forme dermatosis is a little mentioned dermatological problem. The hyperpigmentation is a common clinical feature of this dermatological disorder. The exact etiology of the disorder is not known. Terra firma-forme dermatosis is considered a member in group of “dirty dermatoses”. Unal et. noted that Terra firma-forme dermatosis was a not well-known and surely underestimated vexing skin condition. This dermatological problem was firstly described by Duncan, Tschen and Knox in 1987.

There are few publications regarding this dermatological disorder and there is still no clear information about its etiology. The authors hereby present an additional report of this skin disorder, occurring in an Asian male. In the present case, the patient complained about occurrence of dark skin lesion at the back.

Of interest, in the present case, there is a history of self-prescribed medication that might be a trigger factor for hyperpigmentation of the skin. In fact, there is no specific recommended management for this skin problem. The biopsy is also not recommended. Only the dermatoscopic examination is required. The main finding from dermatoscopy is large polygonal plate-like brown scales arranged together giving a mosaic pattern.

Generally the skin lesion due to Terra firma-forme dermatosis might be managed by alcohol rubbing. As noted by O'Brien and Hall, “The changes usually occur on the neck in childhood as dirty brown patches that cannot be removed with soap but are easily removed with alcohol.” Nevertheless, in the present case, the self-medication by alcohol rubbing was performed by the patient and the skin problem could not be resolved.

In the present case, the patient denied any further investigation and lose follow-up.

The recognition of this possible skin presentation is necessary.

As noted by Aslan, this skin disorder “should be kept in mind to avoid unnecessary diagnostic testing and treatment.” The lesion might mimick other skin diseases. Freemyer et al. noted that this dermatological problem “should be considered when patients present with hyperkeratotic hyperpigmented lesions.”

CONCLUSION

A case of Terra firma-forme dermatosis is presented. The exact etiology of the skin lesion is not known but there might be a relationship with irritant.

CONSENT

The authors obtained written, informed consent from the patients for the publication of this article.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare for no conflict of interest.
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