Cutaneous lupus tumidus: An unusual unilateral presentation

Samia Mrabat¹, Hanane Baybay¹, Zakia Douhi¹, Sara Elloudi¹, Fatima Zahra Mernissi¹, Mouna Rimani²

¹Department of Dermatology, University Hospital Hassan II, Fes, Morocco, ²Hassan Center of Pathology, Rabat, Morocco

Corresponding author: Samia Mrabat, MD, E-mail: samiamrabat91@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Lupus erythematosus is a multisystemic autoimmune disease characterized by the production of autoantibodies against cellular constituents. The most affected organ is the skin, which may be involved in isolation or accompanied by systemic manifestations [1]. Cutaneous manifestations of lupus may be classified into the following: chronic cutaneous lupus erythematosus (CCLE), subacute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (SCLE), and acute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (ACLE). Lupus tumidus is considered a separate entity, showing a marked response to treatment with antimalarial drugs, extreme photosensitivity, and characteristic histopathologic findings [2].

CASE REPORT

A 52-year-old male with no history of comorbidity and medication presented himself with a slightly itchy lesion on the face persistent for twelve months. The lesion emerged as an erythematous macule, later evolving into an infiltrated erythematous lesion. There were no other systemic signs, such as photosensitivity or arthralgia. The patient reported a lack of improvement after the application of a topical corticosteroid. An examination of the face revealed a well-limited erythematous plaque roughly 4 cm in size on the left malar region (Fig. 1). A skin biopsy revealed deep perivascular and periadnexal lymphocytic infiltration of the skin (Fig. 2) and papillary edema with mucinous dispositions (Fig. 3), thus confirming the diagnosis of cutaneous lupus tumidus. The patient was started on antimalarials, photoprotection measures, and tacrolimus with great improvement.

DISCUSSION

The term lupus erythematosus tumidus (LET) was first used by Gougerot and Burnier in 1930 to describe infiltrated erythematous lesions with no clinical signs of desquamation or other superficial changes [3]. Lupus erythematosus tumidus may begin at any age, including childhood, but, according to one study, the mean age of onset is 36.4 years. The majority of patients with LET...
are extremely photosensitive [4]. Lupus erythematosus tumidus may clinically mimic other skin disorders, such as polymorphous light eruption, pseudolymphoma, and Jessner lymphocytic infiltration. A histopathological examination of these skin lesions is, therefore, required to confirm the diagnosis. LET differs from the other conditions mainly by dermal mucin deposition and the lack of dermal edema [5]. Most patients with LET successfully respond to antimalarials and sunscreen. Other treatments, including topical or systemic corticosteroids and immunosuppressive agents, have been demonstrated to be effective [6].

CONCLUSION

Our case emphasizes the importance of detailed clinical examination as well as histopathological analysis in the diagnosis of this rare form of cutaneous lupus.

Consent

The examination of the patient was conducted according to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent forms, in which the patients gave their consent for images and other clinical information to be included in the journal. The patients understand that their names and initials will not be published and due effort will be made to conceal their identity, but that anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

REFERENCES


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