ADVERSE DRUG REACTIONS, INCLUDING SJS, TEN

CAPECITABINE-INDUCED REPIGMENTATION IN A VITILIGO PATIENT

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Background: Capecitabine is a chemotherapeutic drug that belongs to the fluoropyrimidine family. It is an oral prodrug that is converted to its active metabolite, 5-fluorouracil, by thymidine phosphorylase. It is the first-line treatment option for metastatic solid tumors, particularly for breast and colon cancer, and the most common cutaneous side effects are hand-and-foot syndrome, alopecia, and rash.

Observation: An 82-year-old woman, with of universal vitiligo for 39 years, started chemotherapy with capecitabine for metastatic breast cancer. After 5 months of treatment, she noticed repigmentation of vitiligo in sun-exposed areas, with increased pigmentation when compared to her skin color before vitiligo. Hyperpigmentation is an uncommon adverse effect of capecitabine, occurring in approximately 3 % of patients. Most cases are observed in black or asian patients, and the lesions affect predominantly the skin folds, palms and soles. Though the exact pathogenesis is unknown, some authors suggest that a direct stimulation of melanogenesis in the melanocytes, a post inflammatory hyperpigmentation secondary to increased photosensitivity or a combination of both mechanisms may be responsible for the process of hyperpigmentation. There are only two case reports in the literature of capecitabine inducing repigmentation of vitiligo. In these cases, 5-fluorouracil may stimulate the growth of pigment cells derived from hair follicles or inhibit the agents responsible for destruction of melanocytes in vitiligo.

Key message: The presence of repigmentation in photoexposed areas in a patient with stable universal vitiligo is a very rare side effect observed with capecitabine. To our knowledge, this is the third case reported in the literature. Despite not life-threatening, this side effect may negatively impact the quality of life of oncologic patients. Due to the rarity of this association, we aim to draw attention to this side effect, as the recognition of these cases will allow more studies and search for treatment options.