



ATOPIC ECZEMA/DERMATITIS

BULLOUS ECZEMA CAUSED BY 4-HYDROXYANISOLE : A CASE REPORT

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Background: Skin bleaching cosmetics are widely used in most African countries. The active ingredient in these cosmetic products is often hydroquinone, glucocorticoids and mer-cury. The dermatologic complications associated with this practice have been comprehensively reported. Here in we describe a case of abdominal bullous eczema in a young Tunisian female following application of leucodinine B® cream.

Observation: A 27-year-old woman, with a history of hyperpigmentation of the abdominal skin was referred to our department with erythematous bullous lesions localized on her abdomen. She admitted to have applied on her abdomen mequinol cream during the last week. No other oral or topical medications were used by the patient. On dermatologic examination, she had erythematous-infiltrative and edematous plaques on the abdomen with erosions and multiple clear fluid-filled bubbles. She had several small infiltrated erythematous plaques with ill-defined margins and surmounted by blisters which were distributed over, the neck, the extrem-ities and the trunk. She had no particular med-ical history. The exposure to mequinol and the distribution of the lesions on the pri-mary chemical exposure site allowed us to retain the diagnosis of bullous eczema induced by mequinol. Improvement of symp-toms was noticed by stopping mequinol and using topical corticosteroids.

Key message: All bleaching agent may have multitude of dermatologic complications. Mequinol or 4-hydroxyanisole is a pheno-lic compound, which was first shown by Riley et al to be a strong mela-nocytotoxic agent. In fact, this product inhibits melanogenesis by its binding to the enzyme tyrosinase, or by oxidation of toxic free radicals that damage lipopro-tein membrane of melanocytes. Thus, mequinol has been shown to be more effective and less irritating than hydroquinone and has been used extensively in Europe. With mequinol, many subjects experienced mi-nor side effects such as redness, burning/stinging, hypopigmentation and desquamation. Confetti depigmentation is the most serious side effect. In our case, we report an unexpected adverse event in patient when applying mequinol developed an expanded bullous eczema.

