



DERMATOPATHOLOGY

EROSIVE PUSTULAR DERMATOSIS: A CLINICOPATHOLOGIC STUDY OF 33 CASES

C Tomasini⁽¹⁾ - A Michelerio⁽¹⁾

University Of Pavia, Ircss Fondazione Policlinico San Matteo, Department Of Medical, Surgical, Diagnostic And Pediatric Sciences, Dermatologic Clinic, Pavia, Italy⁽¹⁾

Introduction: Erosive pustular dermatosis (EPD) is a sterile, idiopathic, chronic condition mainly affecting the scalp of elderly. Skin biopsy is considered of little value for EPD diagnosis.

Objective: The aim of this study was to delineate the clinicopathologic spectrum of the disease and possibly to define the primary lesion of EPD through a review of the clinical and histopathologic features of 33 patients with an EPD diagnosis.

Materials and Methods: The clinical and pathological records of patients with a clinicopathologic diagnosis of EPD, between 2011-2018, at the Dermatopathology Unit of Turin University were reviewed.

Results: Thirty-three elderly patients with EPDS were identified, 24 males and 9 females. In 31 patients the disorder affected the scalp, in one patient the face and in one the nipple. On the scalp, the vertex was the most common location, with severe androgenetic alopecia or total baldness observed in 19/30. Only 3 patients had been given a clinical diagnosis of EPD. Triggering factors included physical trauma of any kind (including surgery) in 18/33 cases and herpes zoster in 1/33. Four patients were affected by autoimmune disorders. Disease presentation varied markedly from tiny, erosive, scaly lesions to crusted and hemorrhagic plaques with lakes of pus. Follicular-based pustules were observed in 8 cases. Biopsy specimens which had been taken from the erosive, crusted, or cicatricial lesions (25 cases) showed a varying combination of unspecific changes -including intraepidermal pustules-, in line with previous observations. Conversely, in 8 patients where biopsies had been taken from follicular-based pustules a spongiform, pustular infundibular folliculitis was observed.

Conclusions: In a subset of patients with hair-bearing scalp, the primary lesion of EPD is a spongiotic, pustular superficial folliculitis. The clinicopathologic similarities with other neutrophilic dermatoses, such as pustular pyoderma gangrenosum, suggest this condition should be included in this disease spectrum.

