



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

VARICELLA AS A CAUSATIVE FACTOR OF ERYTHEMA MULTIFORME MINOR

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Background: Erythema multiforme minor is a self-healing acute hypersensitivity reaction. The hallmarks of the disease are symmetric concentric erythematous or violaceous targetoid lesions with haemorrhagic, necrotic, vesicular or bullous center. The tendency to form coalescing polycyclic shapes with central clearing or manifestation as urticaria-like lesions or blisters is observed. Typically affected sites include the dorsa of the hands and feet, extensor surfaces of the knees and elbows, rarely the forearms, face and neck. This form of the disease is preferentially triggered by viral infections - commonly HSV1, followed by HSV2. There are few incidental reports in the literature of varicella zoster virus as a causative factor of erythema multiforme minor. Here we present an 8th case report of this unusual association in adult.

Observation: A 31y/o caucasian man developed diffuse polymorphic macular-papular-vesicular-pustular lesions after two days of fever and malaise. On the 7th day of infection, he was diagnosed with varicella and began oral treatment with acyclovir (3x 800mg/d.b. for 7 days). On the 13th day from the onset, the patient developed grouped, coalescing, itching urticaria-like lesions featuring small central vesicles affecting the extensor surface of the elbows, knees and lateral neck. Mucosal surfaces remained unaffected. The diagnosis of erythema multiforme minor was based on the clear clinical features and medical history. Due to the lesions' spreading, the patient received a short course of low dose oral methylprednisolone and hydroxyzine leading to complete recovery within one week. The diagnosis of varicella in that patient was serologically confirmed later with EIA IgG and IgM examination.

Key message: Although erythema multiforme minor is usually triggered by herpesvirus infection, varicella zoster virus should be kept in mind as a rare causative agent of this form of the disease.

