



SKIN MANIFESTATIONS OF INTERNAL DISEASE

ACANTHOSIS NIGRICANS PRESENTING AS THE EARLY SIGN OF TUMOR METASTASIS

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Background: Acanthosis nigricans (AN) is a rare cutaneous condition that can be associated with certain endocrinological or autoimmune disease, or malignancy. We reported an unusual case of AN as early sign of tumor metastasis.

Observation: A 71-year old man presented with 4 months history of a rapidly progressing verrucous lesions of skin and oral mucosa without any systemic symptoms. He underwent cystectomy for transitional cell carcinoma (TCC) and postsurgery chemotherapy at age 60. At 1 year and 7 years post cystectomy, he had resection of right ureter TCC and subsequently papillary urothelial carcinoma. At the age of 66, he had rectal carcinoma and underwent radical resection. No metastasis was found during previous regular follow-ups. On physical exam, the patient appears well nourished, there is diffused dense papillary proliferation in oral mucosa, hyperpigmentation, velvety cutaneous thickening, verrucous excrescences at the intertriginous areas and hyperkeratosis of the palms and soles. Enlarged lymph node is found at left inguinal area. Skin biopsy was consistent with AN. Esophageal biopsy revealed epithelial hyperplasia. Colonoscopy did not show abnormality. PET-CT showed hypermetabolic lymph nodes at paravertebral, retroperitoneal, bilateral pelvic and left inguinal region. Inguinal lymph node biopsy showed tumor cells, which was consistent with metastatic urothelial carcinoma. Other laboratory findings are negative for endocrine or autoimmune disorders.

Key message: AN can be a potential marker of an undiagnosed or occult malignancy. Most cases are detected prior to or simultaneously with the malignancy diagnosis. Only 21% of cases appear after detection of malignancy. Although our case presented AN 4 years after the last malignancy diagnosis with negative regular follow-ups, we highly suspected tumor metastasis as he already had 2 different carcinomas. Therefore, emergence of AN necessitates a thorough investigation to rule out underlying malignancy. AN can be an early sign of development of metastasis of an existing malignancy.

