



SKIN MANIFESTATIONS OF INTERNAL DISEASE

SWEET SYNDROME INDUCED BY INSECT BITE IN A PATIENT WITH CHRONIC LYMPHOCYTIC LEUKEMIA

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Background: Sweet syndrome (SS) is a neutrophilic inflammatory dermatitis. Over the last years, the understanding of its clinical spectrum has expanded but the exact etiology remains unclear. Some authors suggest a possible pathergy phenomena.

Observation: A 65 year-old women presented to our department for a three-day history of erythematous papules. The lesions had initially started on her buttocks, few hours after an insect bite on the same location. Subsequently, multiple similar other lesions had appeared and progressed to most of her body. On her medical history, we found a chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) evolving since 5 years, with no need of specific treatment. The patient denied any new medications or previous history of rash. The examination revealed a fever at 39°C and the presence of multiple deep erythematous and annular plaques with a centrifugal growth and an erythematous-edematous margins. The entire body was involved, the face and palms, too. Laboratory tests showed an elevated C reactive protein level, with no leukocytosis or hyper eosinophilia. The biopsy specimen showed an edematous dermis with a dense peri vascular infiltrate containing neutrophils and numerous eosinophils. Lesions of leucocytoclasia without vasculitis were described. The diagnosis of SS was confirmed. The patient was treated by doxycycline leading to complete healing within 2 weeks.

Key message: Pathergy phenomena is rarely reported on SS. Only few cases reported at the sites of biopsy, vaccination, as well as insect bites and cat scratches. This phenomena is triggered on patients with CLL who seem to present an exaggerated hypersensitivity to insect bites. It is theorized that in patient with CLL, an excess of IL-4 and IL-5 leads to B cell proliferation and eosinophilic infiltration of the skin. So, the use of doxycycline, by modulating cytokines genes expression, seems to be an interesting therapeutic alternative in these cases.

