



PAEDIATRIC DERMATOLOGY

CHICKENPOX COMPLICATED BY MULTIPLE ABSCESSES IN A PATIENT WITH A RECENT HISTORY OF IMPETIGO

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Background: Chickenpox almost exclusively presents in children under the age of 10, with peak rates of incidence occurring in those between the ages of 1 and 4 years old. Bullous impetigo is a common cutaneous infection which is prevalent in the same age group. It is most commonly caused by *Staphylococcus aureus*, a major component of the flora of the skin. Whilst 1 in 4 patients are at risk of developing herpes zoster in later life, varicella associated morbidity is rare and most patients tend to make a full recovery without medical intervention. Similarly, bullous impetigo tends to follow a relatively benign course if identified and treated early. Nonetheless, since both conditions cause varying degrees of damage to the skin, facilitated entry of micro-organisms and resulting cutaneous and soft tissue infections may complicate the disease course.

Observation: We report a case of primary varicella-zoster infection complicated by diffuse abscesses of varying depth in a two-year-old patient with a recent history of bullous impetigo.

Key message: This case highlights the importance of considering a second diagnosis once chicken pox has been diagnosed. Whilst rare, physicians should maintain a high clinical suspicion for infectious cutaneous complications of varicella in patients with new or abnormal crops, worsening symptoms or a prolonged disease course, particularly in those with a recent history of cutaneous pathologies which further compromise the integrity of the skin, such as impetigo.

