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Miracle of silicia on pitted keratolysis: A case report

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Abstract

Pitted Keratolysis is a superficial bacterial skin infection characterized by crater like pits on soles of feet with mal odour. It is fairly common in India particularly among paddy field workers. A male child aged 10 yrs came to OPD with the symptoms of punched out pits on his both soles of feet associated with perspiration & coldness & foul smell. It was diagnosed to be Pitted Keratolysis. The disease typically affects the pressure bearing areas especially soles of the feet characterized by whitish skin with clusters of punched- out pits, and resulting in smelly feet. The homoeopathic medicine Silicia was prescribed on the basis of totality of symptoms and this successfully cured the child. This case report shows the potential of homoeopathy in the management of Pitted keratolysis.

Keywords: Pitted keratolysis, punched out pits on soles, Silicia

Introduction

Pitted Keratolysis also known as Ringed keratolysis is a bacterial skin infection that affects the soles of the feet and causes pale skin with clusters of punched-out pits, as well as stinky feet. Corynebacteria, *Dermatophilus congolensis*, *Kytococcus sedentarius*, Actinomyces, and Streptomyces are among the bacterias that cause it ^[1].

The pitting is due to destruction of the horny cells (Stratum corneum) by protease enzymes produced by the bacteria. Pitted keratolysis is much more common in males than in females. Occupations at risk include: Farmers, Athletes, Sailors or fishermen, Industrial workers.

Factors that lead to the development of pitted keratolysis include

- Hot, humid weather
- Occlusive footwear, such as rubber boots or vinyl shoes
- Excessive sweating of hands and feet (hyperhidrosis)
- Thickened skin of palms and soles (keratoderma)
- Diabetes mellitus
- Advanced age
- Immunodeficiency

Signs and symptoms of pitted keratolysis

Typically presents as smelly feet (bromhidrosis) Usually affects the sole of the foot - forefoot, heel, or both. Palms are rarely infected. Results in a whitish skin surface with clusters of multiple, fine punched-out pits. Pits often join together (coalesce) to form a larger, crater-like lesion. The appearance is more dramatic when the feet are wet. A variant of pitted keratolysis presents with diffuse red areas on the soles. The pits themselves are usually asymptomatic ^[2].

Pitted keratolysis is usually diagnosed clinically. Swabs are rarely required. However the causative organisms may be identified from the pitted lesions and cultured on brain heart infusion agar. Skin scrapings are often taken to exclude fungal infection. Wood light examination displays a characteristic coral red fluorescence in some cases. The diagnosis is sometimes made by skin biopsy revealing characteristic histopathological features of pitted keratolysis

The following precautions should be taken to prevent recurrence

- Wear boots for as short a period as possible
- Wear socks which effectively absorb sweat, like cotton and /or wool
- Wear open –toed sandals whenever possible

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Fig 1: Before



Fig 1: After

Conclusion

This article proves the potential of Homoeopathy in the management of bacterial skin infection Pitted Keratolysis. Homoeopathy is a holistic system of medicine that treats the patient as an integrated whole. Proper systematic case taking with careful constitutional prescription and observation will produce a positive result.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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