



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

FEVER AND PAPULOPUSTULAR RASH

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Background: Disseminated gonococcal infection is a rare complication of gonorrhoea. It is estimated to affect 0.5 to 3%. Skin lesions occur in 60 to 75% and vary in appearance from petechiae and erythematous papules to isolated pustules, mostly distributed on distal extremities. The clinical spectrum is very broad and includes polyarthritides, tenosynovitis, perihepatitis, endocarditis, meningitis and even septic shock. Diagnosis is confirmed by blood or skin cultures. Histopathological study reveals vasculitis related with septic embolism. Parenteral third-generation cephalosporine associated with azithromycin or doxycycline is the treatment of choice. Complement deficiency should be ruled out in these patients.

Observation: A healthy 27 years old man, presented with a 15-day papulopustular rash and episodic fever. Scarse small erythematous papules, tiny pustules and crusted lesions were noted on palms, soles and trunk. Mild oropharyngeal erythema and an isolated ulceration was found on the lateral edge of the tongue. Otherwise examination was unremarkable. Biochemical, haematological and serological routine were normal except for C-reactive protein of 68 and white blood cell count was 23.800/mm³ (neutrophil 82.4%). CTS did not reveal pathological signs. No organisms were grown from the throat swab. According to the clinical and laboratory signs, the main diagnosis was neutrophilic dermatosis, but blood cultures grew *Neisseria Gonorrhoeae* (1/2), on day 2. Histopathology showed subcorneal pustules and leukocytoclastic vasculitis. He was treated with intravenous ceftriaxone at a dose of 1 g once a day and oral azithromycin, with a good response.

Key message: Cutaneous signs are sometimes the only clinical key to reach a rapid diagnosis and treatment of gonococcal disseminated infections and it is important to consider that these signs may be similar to those of other dermatoses. So dermatologists play a crucial role.

