

# Naevus Comedonicus as Dermatologic Hallmark of Occult Spinal Dysraphism

*Sir,*

Naevus comedonicus is a developmental anomaly of the pilosebaceous apparatus, clinically characterized by papules and comedones arranged in bands. Spinal dysraphism refers to a group of malformations of any or all the midline tissues of the back and spine. Cutaneous manifestations are frequently associated stigmata in more than 50% of cases of occult spinal dysraphism (1). We describe a case of naevus comedonicus associated with hypertrichosis of the sacral region, which gave a hint of occult spinal dysraphism.

## CASE REPORT

A 40-year-old man was evaluated for a midline cutaneous sacral hairy patch, which had been present since birth. He was taking salazopyrine and paracetamol for ankylosing spondylitis. Physical examination revealed localized hypertrichosis associated with grouped, skin-coloured and erythematous papules, some containing a central dark hyperkeratotic plug on the sacral region. A biopsy specimen showed large numbers of atrophic cystically dilated hair follicles, containing abundant lamellated keratin aligned perpendicularly to the skin. Radiologic evaluation revealed ankylosis of both sacroiliac joints, extensive lumbar spine syndesmophytic formation and a large schysis of the sacrum. Magnetic resonance imaging scans demonstrated a wide vertebral fusion defect of the sacrum and a hyperintense lesion in the distal portion of the filum terminale, interpreted as an intradural lipoma.

## DISCUSSION

Cutaneous stigmata of occult spinal dysraphism have been variously described (2). Localized hypertrichosis overlying the spinal defect occurs in about 30% of the cases as a single or combined skin lesion (1). Naevus comedonicus has never been

reported in association with dysraphic conditions, even though common congenital skeletal and central nervous system abnormalities have been described in the naevus comedonicus syndrome, a disorder related to the group of the epidermal nevus syndrome (3, 4).

In our case we believe naevus comedonicus to be not a fortuitous condition, because of the close topographic relationship between cutaneous and skeletal lesions. Naevus comedonicus is a hamartomatous lesion of the follicular infundibulum, which further supports the common origin of ecto-mesodermal anomalies of the skin, bone and nervous system of the lumbo-sacro-coccygeal region.

## REFERENCES

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