

A Case of Penile Pilus Migrans: a Sexually Transmitted Condition?

Patricia Garcia Ortiz, Carsten Sand Petersen and Kaare Weismann

Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Bispebjerg Hospital, Bispebjerg Baakke, DK-2200 Copenhagen, Denmark.

E-mail: patricia@dadlnet.dk

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Fig. 1. Appearance of the lesion at the first consultation (a) and fragments of hair extracted from the mucous membrane after local incision (b).

Sir,

Fragments of hair can penetrate the skin and provoke different local reactions. Short, sharp fragments from

men's barbae can cause interdigital sinuses in barbers (1, 2). Similar lesions have been described in hairdressers (3), and long, curved hairs imbedded in the feet (4) remind one of cutaneous larva migrans.

To our knowledge, fragments of the hair imbedded in the mucous membrane have not been reported previously. In this case a man is presented with a fragment of hair located on the glans penis, probably transmitted during sexual activity.

CASE REPORT

A 54-year-old man consulted us because of a dolorous, long blue string on the glans penis that had been present for 4 months. The lesion developed shortly after an episode of sexual intercourse with an unknown woman during vacation on Honolulu. During erection the string deformed the glans like a wire and caused immediate pain.

Clinical examination showed a clearly visible, dark blue linear lesion on the left side of the external meatus on the glans penis, approximately 1.5 cm long (Fig. 1a). In local anaesthesia, incision of the skin was performed and hair-like structures were extracted (Fig. 1b). Histological analysis confirmed it to be a terminal hair shaft.

DISCUSSION

Penetration of the skin by a hair usually causes a foreign-body giant-cell reaction in barbers and hairdressers and the formation of pilonidal sinus in dancers (5, 6). It has been demonstrated that a hair can also be imbedded in the skin without giving any symptoms, as cutaneous pilus migrans (7). To our knowledge, this is the first report to demonstrate that a hair can penetrate the penile mucous membrane during sexual activity without causing a local inflammatory reaction.

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