Acute Balanoposthitis Caused by Infestation with *Cordylobia anthropophaga*

Sir,

Myiasis is the infestation of human body tissues by *Diptera* larvae. Clinically myiasis can be classified according to the part of the body affected. Cutaneous myiasis includes wound myiasis, creeping eruption and furuncular myiasis in which the larvae penetrate and develop within the skin. The flies responsible for cutaneous myiasis belong to several groups (Table I). Other flies are responsible for nasopharyngeal, ocular, intestinal and urogenital myiasis (1).

We describe here a case of acute severe balanoposthitis in a 10-year-old boy caused by infestation with *Cordylobia anthopophaga*.

CASE REPORT

A 10-year-old Danish boy was admitted to the Department in August 1998 with to a 1-week-old painful swelling of the glans and prepuce (Fig. 1). He had returned from a 1 month visit to Senegal 5 days earlier. Due to impetigo on the feet, treatment with oral penicillin had been instituted the day before admission. In addition to the swelling a small purulent secreting lesion could be seen on the glans. The clinical presentation together with a feeling of "movement" in the area roused suspicion of furuncular myiasis. After application of petrolatum a 10-mm long larva was gently *removed in toto* with forceps (Fig. 1).

The lesion on the glans penis and the inflammatory reaction on the prepuce rapidly resolved. Tetanus toxoid prophylaxis was given.

Fig. 1. Acute balanoposthitis caused by myiasis in a 10-year-old boy. A *Cordylobia anthropophaga* larva was extracted from the tip of the purulent secreting lesion on the glans penis.

DISCUSSION

The patient presented with a furuncular lesion on the glans penis associated with an inflammatory reaction in the surrounding tissue. The unusual localization somewhat modified the clinical signs showing severe preputial oedema. *Cordylobia anthropophaga*, the tumbu fly, is widespread in tropical Africa south of the Sahara (2, 3). Eggs are laid on sand and soil, especially if contaminated by urine and faeces. They may also be deposited on clothing and linen hanging out to dry. Rats are the usual hosts, but around human habitation dogs and humans can be also hosts. After attaching itself by oral hooks the larva penetrates the skin. When fully developed, usually after 14–16 days, the maggot drops to the ground to pupate. In South America the usual cause of furuncular myiasis is *Dermatobia hominis*. In contrast to the tumbu fly, the human botfly usually requires surgical excision for cure.

Table I. *Common causes and clinical presentation of human cutaneous myiasis*

Clinical picture	Common causes
Wound infestation	*Fannia canicularis* (lesser house fly)
	Musca domestica (house fly)
	Cochliomyia hominivorax (screw worm)
	Cochliomyia macellaria (screw worm)
	Chrysomya bezziana (screw worm)
Furuncular lesion	*Cordylobia authropophaga*[a] (tumbu fly)
	Dermatobia hominis[b] (human botfly)
Creeping eruption	*Gasterophilus* (horse botfly)

[a] Widespread in tropical Africa.
[b] Widespread in southern Mexico to northern Argentina.

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