



ACANTHOMA FISSURATUM TO EAR CHAINS – A CULTURAL ASPECT

Dermatology

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ABSTRACT

Acanthoma fissuratum also known as granuloma fissuratum or spectacle frame acanthoma is characterized by localized skin thickening in response to low grade, chronic pressure usually due to spectacle frames. Here we report an interesting case of acanthoma fissuratum in fifty year female due to long term wearing of ear chains.

KEYWORDS

Acanthoma fissuratum, spectacle frame, ear chains.

INTRODUCTION:

Acanthoma fissuratum is a skin change at the site of contact and chronic pressure from spectacle frame^[1]. It is mostly unilateral and occurs in the post auricular groove or bridge of the nose. The lesion often mimics basal cell carcinoma. There is no sex and age predilection. Factors that contribute are weight of the spectacles, ill fitting spectacles, concomitant skin diseases and minor derangement in local anatomy and maceration. It is synonymous with spectacle frame acanthoma and granuloma fissuratum. We report an interesting case of acanthoma fissuratum due to long term wearing of ear chains in a fifty year female.

CASE REPORT:

A fifty year old female presented to the skin OPD with complaints of red to dark colored, itchy lesion over the back of the left ear for past 5 months. The lesion was persistent and gradually increasing in size. Local examination showed a solitary, well-defined, and erythematous to pigmented plaque with central depression, measuring 6×3 cm over the left posterior auricular area. The edges were well-demarcated and slightly raised [figure 1]. History of wearing gold ear chain for past 10 years was present. The groove corresponds to the site where the ear chain was touching [figure 2]. The patient was explained about the irritating stimulus of ear chain and asked to remove the ear chain. This would eventually result in reversal of lesion.

DISCUSSION:

Acanthoma fissuratum is a very rare condition that usually presents with the clear cut history of chronic persistent trauma of the affected site. It is synonymous with granuloma fissuratum or spectacle frame granuloma. It is one of the misnomers in dermatology since no granulomatous response is seen. The exact incidence is not known because many patients never approach for specific treatment. There is no age and sex predilection. The contributory factors are ill-fitting spectacle frames, weight of glasses, prior skin disease, and minor derangement in local anatomy. Adding to the list is the ear chain worn by most of the Indian women as a cultural aspect. The weight of the ear chain and long term usage accounts for causing acanthoma fissuratum.

In 1932, Sutton first described acanthoma fissuratum with history of ill-fitting dentures at the superior labioalveolar sulcus^[2]. Later Epstein described the cases of granuloma fissuratum of the ear.^[3] Common sites for acanthoma fissuratum are retro auricular sulcus, superior auricular sulcus, and lateral aspect of the bridge of the nose near the inner canthus in cases of ill-fitting spectacle frames. The rare sites reported are posterior fourchette of vulva,^[4] penis,^[5] and outer auditory canal^[6]. The classical presentation is a unilateral firm, folded coin-shaped lesion, flesh-colored papule, nodule, or plaque with central groove separating the lesion into two halves (Coffee bean appearance). It may masquerade as basal cell carcinoma.^[7] In case of clinical dilemma microscopy differentiates the two conditions.

Histopathology shows acanthosis, hyperkeratosis with variable parakeratosis. Epidermis shows central reduction corresponding to the longitudinal groove filled with inflammatory cells or keratinous material. Dermis shows perivascular nonspecific chronic inflammatory infiltrate.

The main stay of the treatment of acanthoma fissuratum includes removal of the chronic irritating stimulus which may be ill-fitting spectacles or ear chain as in our case. This usually results in reversal of the lesion. Other modalities that can be tried for persistent cases are surgical excision; intralesional corticosteroids and electro surgery.

CONCLUSION:

Acanthoma fissuratum can occur due to long term wearing of ear chain; hence Indian females should be insisted upon the use of light weight ear chains and avoidance of prolonged use of ear chains.

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None

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

LEGENDS TO FIGURE:



Figure 1: Erythematous raised plaque with central groove



Figure 2: The central groove corresponds to the constant pressure from the ear chain.

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