



IRRITANT CONTACT DERMATITIS TO SELF APPLIED PODOPHYLLIN SOLUTION ON ACROCHORDONS

Dermatology

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ABSTRACT

Skin tags are benign outgrowths of the skin, often treated with podophyllin, a cytotoxic agent used under physician supervision for genital warts. A 53-year-old male with diabetes and hypertension developed severe irritant contact dermatitis after self-applying podophyllin solution to skin tags. He presented with painful, erythematous lesions, erosions, and crusting on his neck, axilla, groin, scrotum, and perianal region. This case highlights the risks of unsupervised podophyllin use, leading to skin erosion, atrophy, and secondary infections. It emphasizes the need for regulation of podophyllin availability and patient education on potential side-effects.

KEYWORDS

Podophyllin, irritant dermatitis, skin tags, self-application, skin erosion.

INTRODUCTION

Skin tags are benign outgrowth of skin, which are short pedunculated, filiform, baglike structures. Podophyllin is a cytotoxic extracted from the mayapple plant and it is a physician assisted application for genital warts and other conditions, whereas skin tags are not infectious and believed to be age related or due to frequent friction and can be easily removed from a radio frequency or electro - cautery.^{1,2}

Case History

A 53-year-old male who is a known case of type 2 diabetes mellitus and hypertensive, presented to a tertiary care centre with complaints of severe itching and painful lesion all over neck, axilla, groin, scrotum and around the anus region, one day following application of podophyllin solution bought from a pharmacist. On cutaneous examination, erythematous to hyperpigmented tender erosion with overlying crust and scab on the neck, bilateral axilla, bilateral groin, and perineal region. The neck had velvety hyperpigmented plaque with multiple pedunculated and sessile papules (Figure 1). The plaques on bilateral axilla were more hyperpigmented (Figure 2), erosions over the scrotum were severe with necrotic slough and the plaques over perianal region were more hyperkeratotic with thick crusts over the erosions (Figure 3).



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

CONCLUSIONS

This case highlights the risks associated with self-application of podophyllin for skin tag removal. While podophyllin is a safe and effective treatment for genital warts when administered by a physician, its unsupervised use can lead to severe irritant contact dermatitis, skin erosion, atrophy, and potential secondary infections. The availability of podophyllin over-the-counter without a prescription should be regulated to prevent such adverse outcomes. Proper patient education on the potential side effects of podophyllin is essential for safe use.

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