Allergic Purpura following Intravenous Administration of Iron Dextran

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To the Editor,

Severe, even fatal allergic reactions are known to occur following intravenous administration of Imferon (iron dextran USP) [1].

A patient who developed symmetric purpura in the lower extremities following intravenous administration of Imferon is described. To the best of our knowledge, a similar side effect to the above-mentioned drug has not been reported previously.

Discussion

Hypersensitivity to parenteral iron preparation may present with collapse, hypotension, respiratory distress, cyanosis, facial oedema or urticaria [1]. The distribution of this patient’s rash, similar to that found in Henoch Schoenlein anaphylactoid type of purpura and the positive MIF reaction to Imferon suggest that the purpura was due to hypersensitivity to this drug.

Case Report

A 35-year-old woman was admitted because of severe iron deficiency anemia (hemoglobin 7 g/dl) due to recurrent bleeding from a duodenal ulcer. Since she could not tolerate enteral iron preparations and refused intramuscular injections, 1.5 g of Imferon diluted in 1,000 ml of 5% dextrose were administered intravenously. There were no immediate side effects to this procedure. However, 24 h later, for the first time in her life, symmetric purpura appeared on the buttocks, thighs and legs. The platelet count was 274,000 µl, the Rumpel-Leede test was negative and cryoglobulins were not found. The coagulogram was normal. A test for the presence of a migratory inhibitory factor (MIF) to Imferon, performed according to the method of Kuritzky et al. [2] was positive. The purpuric rash faded away spontaneously during the following days.

References

