Remission of Localized Cutaneous Leishmaniasis in a HIV-Positive Patient Using Systemic Terbinafine

J. González-Rupérez
M.J. Javaloyas de Morlius
A.M. Moreno Carazo

Service of Internal Medicine and Dermatology, Hospital of Viladecans, and Hospital of Bellvitge, Hospitalet del Llobregat, Barcelone, Spain

Key Words
Terbinafine
Human immunodeficiency virus
Leishmaniasis

Patients with advanced HIV infection may develop localized as well as disseminated leishmaniasis. Treatment includes intralesional or systemic antimonial pentavalents. In some resistant cases amphotericin B, pentamidine isethionate and interferon-gamma [1] have also been used. We present a case of localized leishmaniasis with remission following oral terbinafine.

The patient was a 26-year-old male with a previous history of par-enteral drug addiction, HIV infection and hepatitis C since May 1993. Laboratory values showed a normal hemogram, CD4 of 165 lymphocytes/mm³ and a mild elevation of liver enzymes. Zidovudine treatment was recommended as well as prophylactic co-trimoxazol.

The patient was not cooperative and did not follow the controls. In May 1995 after a 14 months’ stay in Colombia he presented cutaneous desquamative erythematous lesions disseminated on the trunk and limbs, especially on the legs, which suggested tinea corporis; he also presented onychomycosis of the fingers and a periauricular and auricular plaque with superficial excoriation for 1 month (fig. 1). Physical examination was otherwise normal. CD4 was 42 lymphocytes/mm³. Therapy with terbinafine 250 mg/day was recommended to treat the tinea, until the histopathology results of the auricular lesions were available. After 14 days of treatment the lesions disappeared and so did those located on trunk and limbs. Culture of skin and nail lesions showed Trichophyton mentagrophytes and Trichophyton rubrum. Biopsy of the outer ear showed abundant Leishmania (fig. 2).

The history, clinic and histology confirm the diagnosis of American cutaneous leishmaniasis [2]. It is caused by L. braziliensis, L. mexicana or L. amazoniensis, and it is endemic in Central and South America. Although metronidazole, clofazimine and ketoconazole have also provided good results, the experience with these drugs is limited and they are not in the routine prescription. Terbinafine, an epoxidase squalene inhibitor antifungal agent, also presents in vitro activity against some species of Leishmania, specially L. mexicana [3] and L. amazoniensis [4]. In our patient’s condition terbinafine’s clinical efficacy was accidentally demonstrated since it was prescribed to treat tinea corporis and onychomycosis.
Oral terbinafine should be further investigated as an alternative systemic therapy for localized leishmaniasis.

Fig. 1. Lesion of cutaneous leishmaniasis with periauricular and auricular excoriation.

Fig. 2. Dense dermal infiltration of lymphocytes and macro-phages with intracellular Leishmania.

References
Dermatology 1997; 194:86
Schönlein-Henoch Purpura Associated with Gastric Helicobacter pylori Infection
SHP is a syndrome with multiple aetiologies. It has been reported after infectious diseases, but the search for non-infectious aetiologies of vasculitis is necessary. In our case only H. pylori was evidenced by histological examination in antral ulcerations. H. pylori is considered to play an important pathogenic role in duodenal ulcers and gastritis [1]. Treatment usually consists of omeprazole associated with antibiotics (amoxicillin alone or with macrolides or imidazoles).

Another case of SHP associated with antral ulcerations, probably secondary to H. pylori infection, was recently reported [2]. In this case H. pylori infection was treated with omeprazole and amoxicillin and signs of SHP disappeared. A relapse occurred 10 months later, once again associated with H. pylori gastric infection. This case was strongly suggestive of a causative role of H. pylori in the occurrence of SHP. In addition, some cases of SHP have been reported after infection with related bacteria, Campylobacter jejuni [3,4].
Because abdominal pain is frequent in SHP, fibroscopic examination is not systematically performed: thus association of SHP with H. pylori infection may be underestimated. This may be of importance for the treatment and prevention of relapses of SHP, since eradication of H. pylori is possible [1].

Acknowledgements
We wish to thank Dr. A. Margulies, Dr. C. Monegier du Sorbier and Mrs. Doreen Raine for their help.

References
Laurent Machet, Service de dermatologie, CHU Trousseau, F-37044 Tours Cedex (France)