Longitudinal Melanonychia Associated with Bowen’s Disease: Two New Cases

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Since our publication on an unusual presentation of Bowen’s disease with longitudinal melanonychia [1], an article appeared in this Journal on the same topic [2] and we would like to add two new recently observed cases.

Case 1
A 48-year-old patient sought advice for a long-standing warty lesion surrounding his left thumbnail (fig. 1). Thorough examination of this region revealed a thin, yellow-brown pigmented streak extending along the lateral side of the nail plate. This association of chronic papillomatous lesion plus longitudinal melanonychia was suggestive of Bowen’s disease. Four 2-mm punch biopsies taken from the warty area confirmed the intraepithelial malignancy histologically.

Case 2
A 46-year-old patient presented in December 1989 with a longitudinal melanonychia affecting the ulnar portion of his left third fingernail (fig. 2). This pigmentation had been first observed 2 years previously. A

Fig. 1. Yellow-brown pigmentation of the lateral edge of the nail plate (case 1).
Fig. 2. Longitudinal melanonychia of the ulnar portion (case 2).
biopsy of the nail-bed was performed. Histologic examination revealed Bowen’s disease (fig. 3). In February 1990, a partial resection of the nail-bed of the left third finger was performed. In the second histologic examination, Bowen’s disease was confirmed and immunoperoxidase-PAP staining for HPV was positive. Postoperative control after 2 years showed no signs of recurrence.

Discussion
In contrast to basal cell carcinoma, cutaneous pigmented Bowen’s disease is an uncommon finding. Ragi et al. [3] reviewed records of 420 lesions of Bowen’s disease and found 7 pigmented tumors outside the ano-genital area. They concluded that Bowen’s disease should be considered in the differential diagnosis of pigmented lesions. In the nail area, the finding of these two new cases of longitudinal melanonychia, in addition to the published ones, supports the conclusion that we reached in the first report of this condition: Bowen’s disease must be considered in the differential and the etiological diagnosis of longitudinal melanonychia.

Fig. 3. Histology of case 2 showing Bowen’s disease.

References

Announcement
The Dark Side of Sunlight: An International Symposium on Photodermatology
Date: May 28, 1993
Place: Utrecht, The Netherlands
Subjects: Phototherapy, Photodermatitis, Photoimmunity, UV Genotoxicity, UV Carcinogenicity, Ozone Depletion
Speakers: Profs. M. Kripke, F. Urbach, D. Bootsma, J. van der Leun and others
Comment: International experts will present overviews of their fields of research. The symposium is organized on the occasion of Prof. J.C. van der Leun’s retirement.
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160