

Clinical Images

Nodular Prurigo as Initial Presentation of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

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A 72 year-old non-smoker male presented with intensely itching nodular lesions distributed mainly on the extremities over the anterior surfaces of the thighs and legs (Figure 1). The pruritus was intermittent, unbearably severe and was relieved only by scratching of the skin. He was diagnosed as a case of nodular prurigo and was prescribed oral antihistamine and topical corticosteroid. Two months later he presented to us with intermittent fever, exertional



Fig.-1: Photograph showing nodular lesions over the anterior surfaces of the thighs and legs

shortness of breath and non-productive cough. On examination he had pallor, bilateral discrete, firm lymphadenopathy in cervical and axillary areas, hepatosplenomegaly and left sided pleural effusion. Investigation revealed anemia (hemoglobin 9.9 g/dL) with normal leucocyte and platelet count. Ultrasonography of abdomen revealed hepatosplenomegaly, mild ascites and multiple retroperitoneal lymph nodes. Contrast enhanced

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CT scan of thorax revealed bilateral pleural effusion (Figure 2). Excision biopsy of the cervical lymph node revealed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma – diffuse, high grade, large cell type (Figure 3). He was treated with combination chemotherapy.

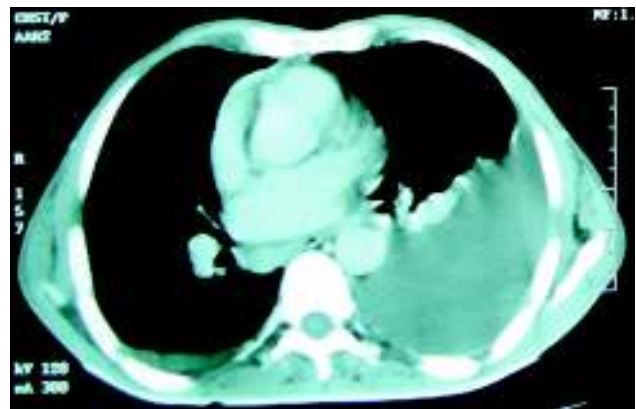


Fig.-2: CECT thorax showing bilateral pleural effusion, more on left side

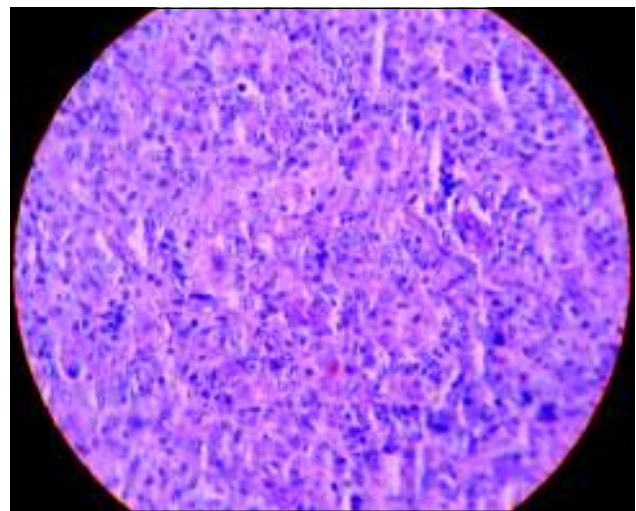


Fig.-3: Microphotograph showing loss of lymph node architecture which is replaced by numerous large, atypical lymphoid cells with vesicular nucleus and prominent nucleoli (H&E stain, 400x)

Prurigo is a group of skin disorders characterized by intensely pruritic papules or nodules on where no identifiable local cause is present for the lesion. Nodular prurigo is characterized by hard warty nodular lesions. Histopathology classically shows marked hyperkeratosis and acanthosis. Systemic causes of pruritus which can give lesions resembling nodular prurigo include chronic renal failure, liver disorder, lymphoma, HIV infection and gluten sensitive enteropathy.¹ Prurigo nodularis has been rarely reported as a presenting manifestation of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.² An evaluation for the underlying lymphoma should be considered in any patient with severe pruritus especially if no primary skin lesion or other causes of pruritus is identified.³

Conflict of Interest : None

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