

Short Communication

Contact pemphigus vulgaris?

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A 52-year-old woman developed a bullous eruption on the oral mucosa at the site of contact with a nickel-containing tooth filling. The lesion was resistant to treatment and persisted long after removal of the contact. Patch tests with the European standard series were positive to nickel. Biopsy and immunofluorescence indicated definite pemphigus vulgaris.

Comment

Pemphigus provoked by contact dermatitis was first described in 1973, the cause being tincture of benzoin (1). Later, a number of publications appeared on the rôle of contact with particular substances in the development of pemphigus, but without adequate patch testing having been performed (2–4). Such reports concentrated mainly on the pharmacologic and toxicologic properties of the substance, and on trying to prove its systemic absorption and the possibility of direct alteration of skin structure (5).

Brenner et al. (5) proposed a pathway involving activation of an immunologic mechanism via allergic contact dermatitis. In a number of case reports, we have proposed that contact dermatitis, both allergic and irritant, can provoke the complicated pathways of various

dermatoses of unknown etiology and pathogenesis, as other stresses, general or local, may (4, 6–8).

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