

complications such as permanent scarring, keloid formation, postinflammatory hypopigmentation (2), and sensitization by crossreactivity to chemically related substances (3). Transient hypertrichosis is a rare reaction that has seldom been reported after henna tattooing (4–6).

performed, although sensitization to PPD was considered as highly possible (7). The hypertrichosis disappeared without any scarring, hyper- or hypopigmentation 4 months later (Fig. 2). No recurrence of eczema or hypertrichosis occurred after a 1-year follow-up.

Case Report

An otherwise healthy 8-year-old boy had a temporary henna tattoo applied in April 2008 on the left arm by a street vendor during a holiday in Bali, Indonesia. Fifteen days later, he developed an eczematous reaction restricted to the tattoo site. Localized hypertrichosis, confined to the area of the temporary tattoo, occurred after a further 5 days when the eczematous reaction was improving (Fig. 1a, b). Dermoscopic examination was unremarkable but showed the hypertrichosis. No biopsy or patch testing was

Discussion

The appearance of hypertrichosis after temporary henna tattooing has been rarely reported in the literature (4–6). In all these cases, the hypertrichosis occurred rapidly, between 5 and 15 days, when the tattoo was fading away, was asymptomatic, and resolved spontaneously within 3–4 months (4–6). A skin biopsy, performed in one child (4), showed an increase in vellus hair follicles with slight peripheral fibrosis. Our case is strikingly similar, except that our

Transient localized hypertrichosis on a temporary henna tattoo

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Temporary henna tattooing remains increasingly popular, especially on holidays. However, the use of additives to hasten drying and darken the colour in commercial black henna, such as para-phenylenediamine (PPD) and other compounds, has led to an increased incidence of allergic contact dermatitis (1) and potential long-term



Fig. 2. Complete resolution after 4 months.

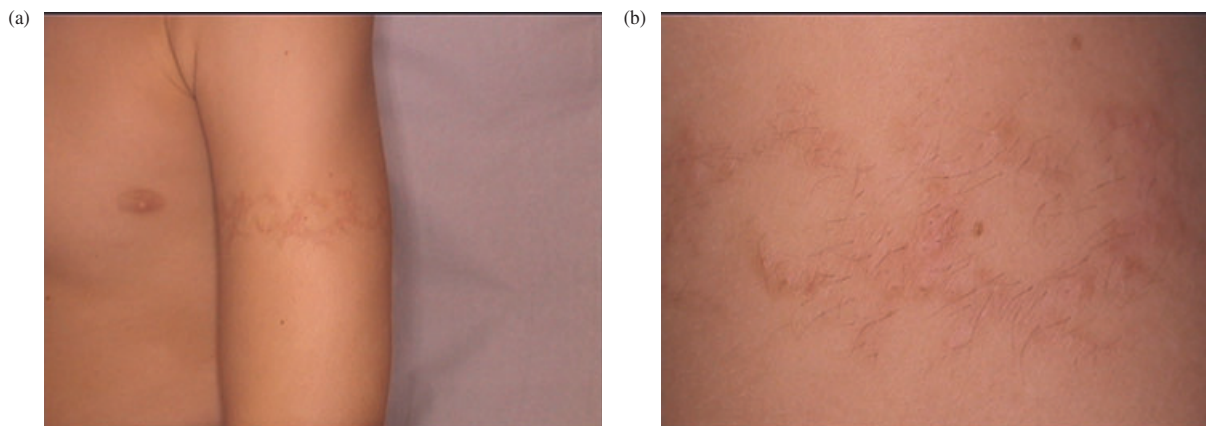


Fig. 1. (a) Localized hypertrichosis of the left arm restricted to the henna tattoo design. (b) Close-up view of hypertrichosis.

patient presented with contact dermatitis occurring prior to hypertrichosis. It remains however difficult to establish a true link between contact dermatitis and hypertrichosis development. We speculate that one – or the combination of several – of the additive substances contained in the commercial henna paste might have played a role in inducing transient hair growth. Indeed, several topical treatments such as tacrolimus 0.1% ointment (8) and prostaglandin analogues (9, 10) have been reported as a cause of hair growth. Unfortunately, as it is usually the case, the tattoo was performed during holidays, making impossible any analysis of the paste and identification of a potential culprit ingredient. Transient hypertrichosis is a benign complication related to henna tattooing that has an excellent prognosis and unnecessary investigation is unwarranted.

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