

Short Communication

Connubial allergic contact balanitis due to chlorhexidine

VINCENT BARRAZZA

137 Avenue Jean Lolive, 93500 Pantin, France

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Case Report

A 40-year-old non-atopic man developed acute pruritic erythema, erosions and oedema of the glans and prepuce less than 24 h after intercourse. Slight balanitis had similarly been noted 3 months before. On questioning, his wife was found to have used a lubricant gel, containing chlorhexidine gluconate 0.003%, plant mucilages and water, before intercourse. With topical corticosteroids, the balanitis cleared in 10 days.

Patch testing with chlorhexidine gluconate (0.5% aq.) and the gel was ++ for both at D2 and D3. The patient experienced no recurrence after avoiding topical products containing chlorhexidine, his wife being advised to use an alternative lubricant.

Comment

Chlorhexidine is a common preservative for cosmetics, toothpastes, lubricants and contraceptive gels (1, 2). Irritant contact dermatitis from its topical use is commoner than allergic (3), though anaphylaxis has been reported

(4). Contact dermatitis may represent an underestimated cause of balanitis, besides infectious and sexually transmissible diseases (5–7). In this case, the dermatitis was also unusual in being connubial.

References

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