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‘Bottle lips’ – a new type of perioral dermatitis

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Possibly every dermatologist will have seen peculiar artefactual skin lesions created by the patients themselves. Here, we present the consequences of an old method promoted by new media.

Case Report

We present the case of a 13-year-old girl, consulting the Dermatology Clinic (accompanied by her very anxious mother) because of a peculiar skin lesion around the lips lasting for 3 days (Fig. 1). The patient described minimal pruritus, and admitted to having induced massive oedema of both lips by pressing the opening of a bottle around her mouth and creating a negative pressure by inhaling air from the bottle and exhaling through the nose. She had done so several times during the last month, keeping the bottle over her mouth for approximately 5–10 min. Emollients were prescribed, and the family was reassured. Oedema of the lips persisted for 24 hrs, slowly fading. Pruritus and erythema also faded during the following days.

Comment

The above-mentioned technique is carefully described on the internet. The swollen lips are caused by increased blood flow and local oedema, persisting for 1 or 2 hrs,



Fig. 1. Swollen lips and round, very well demarcated erythematous plaque around the lips.

but rarely longer. However, applying this technique for > 5 min can damage the lips, causing a bruised appearance. If the procedure is repeated weekly, as in this case, well-demarcated erythema, slight oedema, pruritus and hyperpigmentation around the mouth can persist for weeks as a stigma, and may be misdiagnosed as contact dermatitis.

We report here, probably for the first time in the literature, a typical mechanically induced perioral dermatitis-like lesion. An undesirable, stigmatic appearance may persist for some time if the ‘suction method’ is exaggerated or repeated too often, and these cases may become a challenge for dermatologists. Teenagers should be advised concerning the adverse reaction.

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