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Letter

Malignancies with skin lesions mimicking keratoacanthoma

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Abstract

A variety of tumors mimicking keratoacanthoma have been described. Herein we categorize metastases of visceral malignancies that can present with the appearance of a keratoacanthoma.

Key Words: cancer, cutaneous, hematologic keratoacanthoma, malignancy, metastases, metastasis, sarcoma, skin, solid, tumor.

To the Editor:

We read with interest the superlative manuscript by Kong et al describing a cutaneous angiosarcoma presenting as a keratoacanthoma-like lesion on the scalp [1]. Cutaneous lesions of malignancies can appear with various morphologies. Indeed, cutaneous metastases can mimic infections (such as erysipelas and paronychia) and benign skin tumors (such as epidermoid cysts and pyogenic granulomas) [2]. Rarely, a cutaneous metastasis can mimic a keratoacanthoma [2-11].

We previously described a 53-year-old man whose metastatic esophageal adenocarcinoma not only presented with a scalp nodule and forehead macule, but also an upper lip lesion that mimicked a keratoacanthoma [2]. Subsequently, we summarized the literature regarding the characteristics of patients whose metastatic cancer mimicked a keratoacanthoma [3].

The scalp lesion of Kong et al's patient expands the mimickers of keratoacanthoma to include angiosarcoma in addition to metastatic solid tumors (Table 1) [1-11]. To the best of our knowledge, 10 patients (consisting of 6 men, 2 women, and 2 individuals whose gender was not described) have been reported to develop cutaneous lesions of their melanoma, sarcoma, or visceral malignancy that mimicked a keratoacanthoma. The lesions are usually solitary (90%) and are typically located on the head and neck.

Individuals who develop keratoacanthoma-like visceral malignancy skin lesions have a poor prognosis. The physician should maintain an index of suspicion for metastatic lesions in oncology patients with either a hematologic malignancy or a solid tumor who present with a keratoacanthoma-like lesion and consider a biopsy of the new tumor to rule out a cutaneous metastasis.

Table 1. Malignancies with skin lesions mimicking keratoacanthoma

Angiosarcoma [1]

Breast cancer (ductal carcinoma) [4]

Bronchial cancer (squamous cell carcinoma) [5]

Chondrosarcoma [6]
Esophageal cancer (adenocarcinoma) [2,3]
Lung Cancer (adenocarcinoma [7], intermediate cell carcinoma [8], and non-small cell carcinoma [9])
Melanoma [10]
Mesothelioma [11]

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