Images in Clinical Rheumatology

White Clay Drainage in Chronic Tophaceous Gout

Exudado en «arcilla blanca» en gota tofácea crónica

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

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Introduction

Gout is a disorder of purine metabolism resulting in the deposition of urate crystals around joints.1,2 Chronic Gout is characterized by destructive arthritis, often with degenerative changes, bone erosions and development of tophi. Acute attacks can become polyarticular, additive and ascending; with a tendency to increase in severity.3 Tophi are cardinal feature of this entity; their structure consists of a conglomerate of urate crystals surrounded by fibrosis and inflammatory tissue.

Clinical Case

The patient is a 46-year-old male with a history of hyperuricemia, traumatic amputation of the 4th and 5th fingers of the left

Fig. 1. Tophi with the presence of ulcerated skin and a white “clay-like” secretion.

Fig. 2. Crystals of monosodium urate under polarized light microscopy.

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Discussion

Monosodium urate crystals trigger an intense inflammatory response that can perpetuate their presence. This inflammatory process is mediated by the release of cytokines, including TNF, IL-6, and chemokines ligands CXCL8 and CXCL1.6 The classic presentation of acute attacks is that of a self-limiting monoarticular arthritis, most often of the first metatarsophalangeal joint.7 In some cases, large deposits of urate can drain as a whitish calcareous material that is often confused with a drained abscess. This has been described mainly in the olecranon bursa or the first toe.8

Fever is often present as part of the clinical presentation of patients. Their identification can distinguish it from other diseases with similar clinical manifestations, e.g. infections, which is vital since treatment and prognosis are radically different.

Ethical Responsibilities

Protection of people and animals. The authors declare this research did not perform experiments on humans or animals.

Data privacy. The authors state that no patient data appears in this article.

Right to privacy and informed consent. The authors state that no patient data appears in this article.

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