

Brownish palmar discolouration due to cashewnut dermatitis

A 45-year-old man reported a six-month history of asymptomatic brownish-black discolouration on both palms. He worked as a farmer and frequently handled raw cashewnuts and shell oil, which he sold manually. A skin examination revealed well-defined brown macules on his fingers and palms, while the rest of his skin appeared normal [Figure 1]. Based on his occupational history, along with clinical and dermoscopy findings [Figure 2], he was

diagnosed with cashewnut dermatitis. In the cashewnut, the space between the inner kernel and the double-layered outer shell contains a highly caustic brown, oily liquid rich in anacardic acid and cardol. Workers who handle cashewnut shells are exposed to the shell oil during the slicing process, which causes cauterisation, clinically presenting as brownish to black, thick layers of dead skin on the palmar and dorsal surfaces of their hands.



Figure 1: Brownish discolouration of the bilateral palms.

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Figure 2: Brownish pigmentation of furrow and ridges on the palm. (Polarising dermoscopy, DermLite dL4, 10x).

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Corresponding author:

Dr. Vijayasankar Palaniappan,
Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprosy,
Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital,
Madagadipet, Pondicherry, India.
vijayasankarpalaniappan@gmail.com

**Vijayasankar Palaniappan¹, Suganya Radhakrishnan¹,
Kaliaperumal Karthikeyan¹**

¹Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprosy,
Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital, Madagadipet,
Pondicherry, India.