

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TWENTY-NAIL DYSTROPHY

A 22-year-old male had developed asymptomatic deformity of all his twenty nails, two years ago. Examination revealed that all his finger-nails and toe-nails showed light yellow discoloration and rough surface with pits and longitudinal ridges. Pterygium was present in both thumb nails, with a similar tendency in the other nails also. There were no paronychia changes. No other skin lesions were present. Hair, teeth and mucous membranes were normal. Biopsy showed hyperkeratosis, moderate acanthosis, spongiosis and a mild perivascular chronic infiltrate, consistent with chronic dermatitis.

Twenty-nail dystrophy has been documented in childhood.^{1,2} Some have described twenty-nail dystrophy to be associated with alopecia areata,³ while others recognised it as a variant of lichen planus.⁴ Our patient being an adult, and having pterygium unguis which is known to be a classical nail change in lichen planus, had no sign of lichen planus clinically or

histopathologically or any other dermatosis. It is our opinion that twenty-nail dystrophy is a distinctive clinical entity with a characteristic eczematous histopathology.

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References

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