SEASONAL LEG ULCER

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Hippocrates had pointed out the occurrence of leg ulcers in persons with varicose veins. Leg ulcers can cause a serious disability. According to Brodid (1846), this disease probably will not kill the patient but may render the patient miserable. According to Boyd, Jepson, Katcliffe and Rose (1952), chronic ulceration of leg is present in about 5 per millie of the popuiation. The following series of patients has been presented here to demonstrate the peculiar association of leg ulcers in monsoon season.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The patients were studied in S, S. G. Hospital, Baroda. Twenty five patients with leg ulcers were observed in monsoon season. The study was carried out with the purpose of finding out the cause and the response of the ulcer to local treatment with eusol. A detailed history and examination of patients regarding age, sex, occupation, injury, syphilis, tuberculosis varicosity, anemia, blood pressure, nervous system check up, venous thrombosis, diabetes, pulse and condition of arteries were recorded; size, shape and site of ulcers were recorded; smear and biopsy examinations were done.

OBSERVATIONS

Of the 25 patients, 21 were males and 4 were females. All ulcers were single. 24 patients were labourers and 1 patient was clerk. There was no positive history of trauma. No aetiological cause could be revealed clinically.

The ages of the patienss ranged from 15 years to 30 years. Left side was more commonly involved than the right side. The average duration of ulceration ranged from 4 days to 10 days

The average diameter of ulcer ranged from 1.5 cm. to 2.9 cms. All were shallow ulcers, oval or round in shape and movable over deeper structures. Margins were only slightly oedematous and sloping. Serous oozing was present. Pus was minimal. Floor of the ulcer showed pale granulation tissue. The surrounding area did not show much reaction. The common site was medial aspect of leg 3 to 5 inches above the medial malleolus. There was no general constitutional upset. Culture report revealed growth of staphylococcus albus, and streptococcus haemolyticus and biopsy report revealed acanthosis, infiltration of dermis with lymphocytes and plasma cells and infiltration with round cells around adenexal structures.

All the patients were treated with local eusol dressing on alternate days. The average duration of healing amounted to 8 to 16 days.

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DISCUSSION

It has been our observation that the leg ulcers without any history of injury or any revealing cause are frequently occurring in monsoon compared to other seasons. In the above series, the patients commonly affected were 15 to 30 years old, males more affected than females, and were usually labourers. The duration of ulceration ranged from 4 days to 10 days. Culture and biopsy examination revealed no specific clue. We think that the aetiology of this monsoon ulcer may be attributed to the relative turgidity of the skin and subcutaneous tissues in monsoon due to less evaporation. The frequent incidence of this disease in labourers is not surprising as they are more frequently exposed to minnor unnoticeable abrasions on their legs which already suffer from a strained circulation due to prolonged erect posture of these people. Also turgidity makes skin more vulnerable to ulceration. Also their legs are exposed to the mud full of organisms.

According to Anning (1954), there is rarely any relationship between the type of infection or the number of bacteria in the ulcerated area and the rate of healing. According to Fergusson and Logan (1961), mean rate of healing with eusol is 61.4 sq. mm. per day which is more than that with most other agents and eusol combines ease of application with speed, efficiency and safety in use. It is also easily available and cheap. This made us to use eusol with good results so that healing on average occurred in 12 days.

SUMMARY

A peculiar association of high frequency of leg ulcers with monsoon season has been discussed here. We have tried to explain the pathogenesis of this higher seasonal incidence.

Table I

SEX INCIDENCE OF LEG ULCERS

No. of patients	Sex	Percentage
21	Male	84
4	Female	16

Table II

AGE INCIDENCE OF LEG ULCERS

Age	No. of Patient	Percentage
15–20 years	7	28
21–25 years	10	40
26–30 years	8	32

Table III

SIDE INCIDENCE OF LEG ULCERS

Side	No. of patient	Percentage
Left	14	56
Right	11	44

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