Urticaria due to inhalant allergens

Sir,

The cause of urticaria often remains unknown. Rarely, inhalant allergens have been found to be responsible. Inhalation of the nicotine in tobacco or zinc fumes have been reported as the cause of the urticaria. We report a patient with urticaria whose lesions cleared completely in 72 hours whenever she wore a face mask or nasal filter.

A 33-year-old lady presented with urticarial lesions occurring since 6 months. The urticarial wheals used to occur daily, at any time and used to completely resolve within 12 hours. She denied any history of fasting or going out of the city. The urticaria used to clear with pheniramine maleate.

She was advised to wear the facial mask for 48 hours, which she continued wearing for 72 hours. All the urticarial lesions cleared during the next 3 days. She remained all right even without a face mask for another 2 days, when she again started getting similar wheals. At this juncture she was given a nasal filter, which led to the clearance of urticaria completely during the next 3-4 days.

Complete disappearance of urticarial lesions on wearing a facial mask or nasal filter in 3 days without any treatment suggests that the urticaria was due to inhalant antigens. Recurrence of urticaria within 2 days of removal of a facial mask further confirms that the urticaria was due to some inhalant antigen.

One should suspect inhalant allergens as a possible cause of urticaria in a case of prolonged duration which recurs in particular seasons, improves on a change of place (especially on going to hill stations) and recurs on coming back. This can be confirmed if the urticaria disappears or improves if the patient wears a simple face mask for 46 hours. A nasal filter is the right device to be recommended in such situations since it is able to filter all inhalant antigens.

REFERENCE


Topical lincomycin gel in acne vulgaris

Sir,

I read with interest the article by Sharma et al on lincomycin gel. I would like to offer some comments.

The study concludes that lincomycin gel is a safe and effective treatment option for mild to moderate acne vulgaris but it does not even touch upon a more important aspect, i.e. whether it is safer or more effective than other available and accepted treatments for acne vulgaris.

Clindamycin is a synthetic derivative of the antibiotic lincomycin which is isolated from Streptomyces species. Clindamycin is accepted as a topical treatment for acne.