

Case 2



Eruption around the Nose and Mouth

A 56-year-old man presents with a six-month history of an eruption involving the perioral, perinasal, and periorbital areas. He had developed some irritation around his nose about nine months ago and was prescribed cortisone, which he has used on and off since then.

Questions

1. What is the diagnosis?
2. What is the significance?
3. What is the treatment?

Answers

1. The diagnosis is periorificial dermatitis.
2. Periorificial dermatitis is characterized by discrete, symmetrical, grouped, flesh-coloured to erythematous papules, papulovesicles, and/or papulopustules (usually no larger than 2 mm in diameter) on an erythematous and scaly base in the perioral, perinasal, and periorbital areas. The area immediately adjacent to the vermilion border of the lips is characteristically spared. Pruritus is variable and mild. The exact etiology is not known. The most common identifiable cause is the use of topical corticosteroids on the face. The condition may also result from the use of inhaled corticosteroids and, less frequently, nasal or systemic corticosteroids. Consequently, one should not apply topical corticosteroids, especially potent ones, on the face for prolonged periods of time. Instead, topical calcineurin inhibitors should be considered for facial dermatoses, particularly conditions known to be chronic.
3. Periorificial dermatitis is benign and self-limited, and it resolves without scarring or residual disturbances of pigmentation. If left untreated, patients can experience fluctuating disease for months or years. Patients who have appropriate treatment have an excellent prognosis, and the lesions usually resolve within a few months. Topical therapy with metronidazole, erythromycin, clindamycin, tacrolimus, or pimecrolimus is usually effective. However, if the condition has been present for more than a couple months, oral tetracycline-family antibiotics are required for two to three months duration for optimal results. Referral to a dermatologist is often recommended for the diagnosis and treatment of this condition.

Provided by: Dr. Alexander K.C. Leung and Dr. Benjamin Barankin