A Case of a Traumatic Epidermal Cyst Containing Glass Pieces

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We report a case of a 40-year-old man with a traumatic epidermal cyst on the lateral malleolus. It was unusual that the cyst contained glass pieces as a foreign body, which did not induce foreign body reaction in both clinical and histopathological aspects. To our best knowledge, this is the first case of an epidermal cyst to manifest as a foreign body cyst containing glass pieces in cystic contents. (Ann Dermatol 12(2) 117~118, 2000).

Key Words : Epidermal cyst, Traumatic epidermal cyst

An epidermal cyst is the most common cyst encountered in the skin. It is usually the result of inflammation around a pilosebaceous follicle, but it is sometimes from the deep implantation of epidermal fragments by a penetrating wound1. Rarely, it is sometimes caused by a developmental defect in Gardner's syndrome and naevoid basal cell carcinoma syndrome2,3.

We report a patient with a traumatic epidermal cyst containing glass pieces introduced into the dermis through a lacerated wound. This is believed to be the first report of a glass-containing epidermal cyst presented as a foreign body.

CASE REPORT

A 40-year-old male patient visited our clinic to remove a protruding mass on the lateral malleolus of the right foot. A year and a half prior to this visit, he had trauma on his leg when he accidentally fell on the floor. At the time, he received multiple lacerated wounds on the leg, where several pieces of a broken glass were embedded into the leg. He tried to remove them by himself, but two broken pieces of glass were left in the wound of the malleolus. However, he did not receive any medical assistance because the wounds healed spontaneously without bothering symptoms. Prior to his visit, a small nodular mass was growing slowly to produce a round mass without any problems in the region. Recently, he noticed a protruding yellowish spot on the center of the mass.

On examination, it was a 1.5 × 1.5 cm sized, dome-shaped, movable mass with a yellowish central punctum. Through the punctum, cheesy keratinous materials were evacuated by squeezing the mass with minor pressure. Two large pieces of glass were found in the cystic contents during our operation to remove the mass (Fig. 1). A skin biopsy revealed the typical features of an epidermal cyst without foreign body inflammatory reaction or granuloma formation (Fig. 2).

DISCUSSION

Traumatic epidermal cysts of the skin are not rare1. These cysts occur most often on exposed sites such as the palms, fingers and soles, and are especially prevalent in those with occupations that are predisposed to this injury4. The genesis of epidermal cysts has not been fully understood, but they are known to develop by different mecha-