SEVERE BULLOUS REACTION TO AN OVER THE COUNTER TOPICAL SALICYLIC ACID-LACTIC ACID SOLUTION USED TO TREAT RECALCITRANT PLANTAR WARTS

REACŢIE BULOASĂ SEVERĂ LA APLICAREA UNEI SOLUŢII PE BAZĂ DE ACID SALICILIC ŞI ACID LACTIC PENTRU TRATAREA VERUCILOR PLANTARE

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Case presentation

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Abstract

Background: Plantar warts are a common cutaneous disorder of viral origin. There are many treatment modalities for this disorder. The purpose of this paper was to present the case a 12-year old boy, brought by his mother for a 3-day history of pain and swelling of the left foot, following the application of a topical, over- the-counter solution containing salicylic and lactic acids. Our goal was to establish a treatment to control the disease.

Materials and methods: Examination revealed a hyperkeratotic, multiloculated lesion, with underlying bullae on the anterior left sole, associated with an erythematous streak of lymphangitis going up to his leg.

Results: The bulla was excised and the resulting wound treated with topical povidon iodine solution, which the patient was instructed to apply daily. The patient was also recommended amoxicillin-clavulanic acid combination and he improved. Finally, the patient was treated with a cream containing a hyaluronic acid-sulphadiazine cream, which completed the healing process.

Conclusions: There are many treatment modalities for plantar warts. The salicylic-lactic acid solution used by this patient was containing 167 mg/mL of each active ingredient. Care must therefore be exercised in the treatment of patients and in informing patients, who may apply the low concentration, over the counter topical salicylic acid in the full belief they are safe from side effects.
Case report

A 12-year old boy, brought by his mother, presented with a 3-day history of pain and swelling of the left foot. This had followed the application of a topical, over-the-counter solution containing salicylic and lactic acids in equal concentrations. The mother also stated that, prior to each application, the child’s foot had been soaked in a salt bath to "soften" the lesions.

Examination revealed a hyperkeratotic, multiloculated, lesion, with underlying bullae on the anterior left sole (Figure 1) (1) associated with an erythematous streak of lymphangitis going up to his leg.

The bulla was excised and the resulting wound (Figure 2) treated with topical povidon iodine solution, which the patient was instructed to apply daily. The patient was also recommended amoxicillin-clavulanic acid combination and he improved. Finally, the patient was treated with a cream containing a hyaluronic acid-sulphadiazine cream, which completed the healing process (Figure 3).
DISCUSSIONS

Plantar warts are a common cutaneous disorder of viral origin. There are many treatment modalities for this disorder. The salicylic-lactic acid solution used by this patient contained 167 mg/mL of each active ingredient.

Salicylic acid appears to work as a keratolytic agent, dissolving the intercellular bonds, thus destroying the tissue invaded by the virus and the irritation caused by treatment may also stimulate an immune response that may be detrimental to the virus (1, 2).

It is a cheap and effective method of treatment and is considered superior to placebo (3).

Side effects may include local irritation (1, 2) (for that reason facial application is to be avoided), burning sensation, pain and possibly blister formation. The latter appeared in up to 13% of patients in an isolated study (4) using 15% salicylic acid and 15% lactic acid topically.

Care must therefore be taken in the treatment and provision of information to patients, as they may apply the low concentration, over the counter topical salicylic acid in the full belief they are safe from side effects.

REFERENCES