

Visual Treats in Dermatology

Herpes zoster sparing pityriasis versicolor – Anatomic response

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A 62-year-old male with no known co-morbidities presented with painful vesicles on the right shoulder and front of the chest for a 3-day duration. On examination, there were multiple discrete grouped vesicles arising from erythematous skin and containing clear fluid, some vesicles showing umbilication distributed on the upper right pectoral region, lateral and right posterior shoulder in T2–4 dermatome suggestive of herpes zoster [Figure 1]. The patient also had multiple discrete and confluent hypopigmented macules with polycyclic border at the upper right pectoral region, right shoulder region, neck, and pre-sternal region suggestive of pityriasis versicolor [Figure 1]. Interestingly, the grouped vesicles of herpes zoster spared the areas affected by pityriasis versicolor [Figure 1] suggesting the classical anatomic response. Tzanck smear from vesicles showed multinucleate giant cells and the potassium hydroxide mount test showed spores and non-branching mycelia of the hypopigmented lesions. The patient was treated with acyclovir, fluconazole, and clotrimazole cream. Anatomic response is defined as the modulation of the inflammatory response of one dermatosis by another unrelated dermatosis at the same site sparing the areas affected by the initial dermatosis, here herpes zoster sparing pityriasis versicolor lesions. The postulated mechanism is that *Malassezia* species may form a physical barrier or cause



Figure 1: Multiple grouped vesicles of herpes zoster sparing areas of pityriasis versicolor.

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local immunomodulation preventing another dermatosis from occurring at the same site.^[1]

Ethical approval

Institutional Review Board approval is not required.

Declaration of patient consent

The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for manuscript preparation

The authors confirm that there was no use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for assisting in the writing or editing of the manuscript and no images were manipulated using AI.

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