

End of year photo quiz

AUTHOR
Dr Nigel Stollery
MB BS DPD
GP, Kibworth,
Leicestershire and clinical
assistant in dermatology,
Leicester Royal Infirmary

Test your diagnostic skills

Case 1 Tonsillar hole

This young lady was rather alarmed on looking at her throat to see a large hole in the middle of her tonsil. She had not noticed this before and was otherwise well.

A What is the diagnosis?

B What symptoms can be associated with this condition?



Case 2 Crusted rash

This young girl developed a rash on her upper arm over the course of a few days. Initially there was a single central lesion, but this was followed by the development of new smaller lesions. A schoolfriend had had a similar rash a few days earlier.

A What is the diagnosis?

B What are the likely causative organisms?

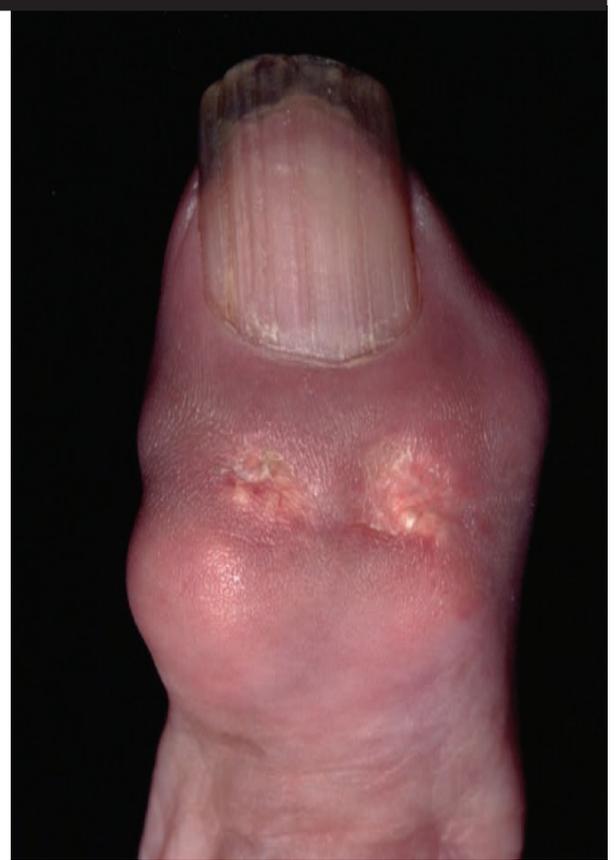


Case 3 Lumpy thumb

A long history of tophaceous gout had led to the development of numerous gouty tophi on this man's fingers. The lesions were painless and were not causing any symptoms but the patient's daughter had become worried that the skin overlying some of them had broken down.

A What drugs can be associated with the development of gout?

B In gout, the formation of crystals in the joints leads to pain. What are these crystals made of?



Case 4 Speckled mole

During a routine examination an odd looking mole was noted on this lady's torso. She remembered it being present from her childhood days and had not noticed any recent changes. She had a strong family history of skin cancer with a first-degree relative having had a melanoma.

A What is the name of this type of lesion?

B How should it be managed?



Case 5 Growing umbilicus

At a routine six-week check a swelling on this baby's umbilicus was noticed. The swelling had a shiny surface and had bled once or twice. The mother was not concerned by it and the baby seemed otherwise well.

A What is the diagnosis?

B How can this condition be treated?

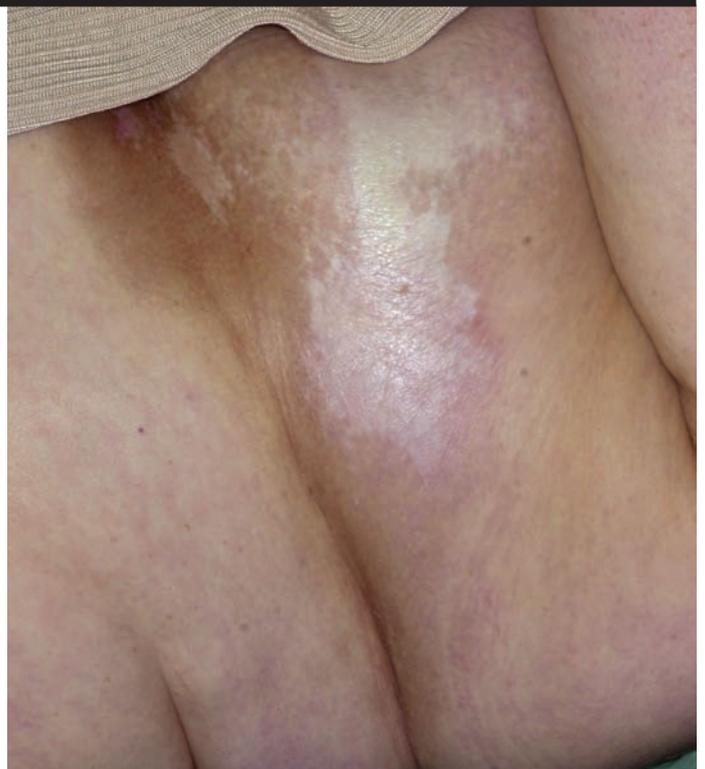


Case 6 White patch

Over a couple of years this lady had developed a large white area on the left side of her body. It was asymptomatic and the rest of her body was normal. She assumed it had occurred as the result of sunburn many years before.

A What is the diagnosis?

B Name two possible differential diagnoses.



The answers can be found on p 32

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Extracted from a 1910 issue of *The Practitioner*

PHYSIC IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

BY T HOUGHTON MITCHELL, M.D.

The quatrain in bold below, said to be from a physician, sums up the general line of treatment in Shakespeare's time.

The fearlessness of the profession in the administration of lethal drugs, without knowledge or consideration as to their ultimate effects, is more than hinted at in *Pericles*: Thou speak'st like a physician, Helicanus, that minister'st a potion unto me that thou would'st tremble to receive thyself. (*Pericles*, Act I., Scene II.)

"Drugs not always do good to the sick, and always do harm to the healthy," was very apposite in the sixteenth century. Epidemic diseases were rife. Creighton, in his *Epidemics in Britain*, states that dysentery and typhus killed large numbers of men on the fleet collected to repel the Spanish Armada, and the broken remnants of the Armada which reached Corunna were like so many floating pest-houses (July 1588).

The same authority records many plague epidemics between 1564 and 1616, of influenza, levis corruptio aeris, of small-pox, and typhus. (Black Assizes, Oxford 1577, Exeter 1586.) The Great Pox, also known under the varied titles - Grandgore Sibbens, Morbus Gallicus, The Neapolitan Disease, Lues Venerea or Syphilis - was rampant, and of a very malignant type. Ague was very prevalent. Shakespeare died after three days' illness, being in perfect health prior to his attack. Creighton hazards the suggestion that he died from Typhus siderans.

A world of Supernaturalism affected alike the pulpit and the stage, the students of science, and the gossips of the village green. Witchcraft was firmly believed in not only by the masses, but by the educated portion of the community - Luther and Calvin amongst others; epilepsy, impotence, squint, infantile paralysis, abortions, hysteria, melancholia, were all attributed to it; amulets, such as texts of Scripture and cabalistic rings, were worn to ward off disease; and charms, incantations, and philtres were used for the cure of it. The astrologer raised the devil or cast a horoscope for a fee.

Goadby's England of Shakespeare states: "Chloride of gold was taken by great ladies, dissolved pearls were supposed to have mystic

virtues, and even coral was a fashionable remedy. Queen Elizabeth had a great aversion to taking physic, and she showed her good sense in avoiding powdered diamonds. Common folk were advised by Dr. Andrew Boorde, to wipe their faces daily with a scarlet cloth, and wash them only once a week.

"Pills made of the skull of a man who had been hanged, a draught of sprint water from the skull of a murdered man, the power of a mummy, the oil of scorpions, the blood of dragons, and the different entrails of wild animals, were all recommended for special diseases.

Complexion washes for ladies and fops, love-philtres for the melancholy, and anodynes for the aged were commonly dispensed by the apothecaries.

"Tumours were supposed to be curable by stroking them with the hand of a dead man.

Chips of a hangman's tree were a great

remedy for the ague. To cure a child of rickets, it was passed, head downwards, through a young tree split open for the purpose, and then tied up. As the tree healed the child recovered. Morbus regius was supposed to be cured by the King's touch."

As plague preventives something "to smell to" was in great demand; civet-boxes, pouncet-boxes, and pomanders were made to suit all purses. The "plague waters of Matthias" had the sanction of the College of Physicians, and its own prescription to break the tumour was as follows: - take a great onion, hollow it, put in a fig, rue cut small, and train a dram of Venice treacle; put it close stopt in a wet paper, and roast it in the embers; apply it hot unto the tumours.

**"If people sick, they come to me,
I purges, bleeds and sweats 'em;
If after that they likes to die,
What's that to me? I lets 'em"**

1868-2008

Supporting general
practitioners for
140 years

PHOTO QUIZ ANSWERS

CASE 1 TONSILLAR HOLE

- A Tonsillar crypts
- B Halitosis, tonsilloliths, sore throat, foreign body sensation and unpleasant taste

CASE 2 CRUSTED RASH

- A Impetigo
- B Staphylococcus or Streptococcus

CASE 3 LUMPY THUMB

- A Thiazide diuretics, salicylic acid, salicylates,

- niacin, amlodipine, and isotretinoin
- B Monosodium urate

CASE 4 SPECKLED MOLE

- A Nevus spilus
- B It should be monitored in the same way as any congenital nevus as rarely malignant transformation can occur

CASE 5 GROWING UMBILICUS

- A Umbilical granuloma

- B Topical silver nitrate or surgical excision

CASE 6 WHITE PATCH

- A Lichen sclerosus et atrophicus
- B Vitiligo, postinflammatory hypopigmentation, or morphea