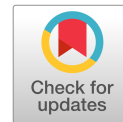


Side effects of tango: connubial contact dermatitis.



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Running head: connubial or consort dermatitis in a tango dancer

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The term “Connubial or Consort allergic contact dermatitis” defines a peculiar dermatitis caused by sensitization towards substances used by people in close contact with the patient. A connubial allergic contact dermatitis in a tango dancer is reported.

Case report

A 53-year-old man presented a 3-year history of a monolateral, pruritic, erythematous lesion on his right temple (Fig. 1). The patient denied atopy or other dermatological diseases. Patch testing was performed with the Italian Society of Allergological, Occupational and Environmental Dermatology (SIDAPA) baseline series (Lofarma, Milano, Italy) on Van der Bend chambers (Van der Bend, Brielle, The Netherlands). Patch tests were applied under occlusion on the patient’s back for 2 days; readings were performed on day (D) 2 and D4 according to ESCD guidelines.¹ A strong positivity to para-phenylenediamine (PPD) 1% (++/+++ on D2/D4) and weak reactions to azo-dyes 6.6% (-/+ on D2/D4) and sorbitansesquioxide 20% (-/+ on D2/D4) was observed. This result wasn't apparently relevant with the patient’s history. Careful investigation about the patient’s habits revealed a passion for tango, which he had been practicing assiduously over the last four years. The patient reported close contact of the area affected by dermatitis with hair and face of his usual dancing partner, who used make up, perfumes and had dyed red hair. The presence of the two sensitizers PPD and azo-dyes was confirmed in the technical data sheet of the hair dyes used by his tango-partner. The repeated skin contact, friction and perspiration while dancing favoured the

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elicitation of the eczema. Suspension of the dance activity for some weeks and avoiding the close cheek-to-cheek contact with his partner improved the dermatitis.

Discussion

Connubial dermatitis is used for dermatitis that occurs by contact with substances transferred to the patient's skin by "spouses"^{2,3} or by other people in close contact in daily life. In literature about 30 cases of connubial dermatitis and photodermatitis have been reported; the most frequently involved allergens are fragrances, preservatives and topical medicaments.²⁻¹⁰ In our case, the source of sensitization was the patient's tango partner. A case of a connubial photodermatitis in a tango dancer caused by ketoprofen has been reported.⁴ PPD, a major component of hair dyes, is a strong sensitizer and a common allergen. It is well known to cause contact dermatitis in hairdressers and in those who dye their hair; it has been reported as a cause of connubial dermatitis in a few reports.^{5,6} Cross-sensitization between PPD and azo-dyes has also been described.¹¹ The diagnosis of connubial dermatitis should be considered in cases of probable allergic contact eczema when patch test results are inconsistent with the patient's clinical history. In these situations, it may be necessary to extend medical investigation not only to the professional and recreational activities of the patient himself, but also to family members and cohabitants. Our case highlights the importance of good history taking in order to clarify the source of allergic contacts in situations in which no obvious exposures can be found.

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Figure legends

FIG. 1 Clinical presentation of the dermatosis: a monolateral pruritic erythematous patch on the right temple.

