
The Kveim test – a stain on your character?

Sir,

I should like to draw your readers' attention into the needle and syringe I used to coat in ink will be avoided. Thus, the resultant scar and stitch marks can be kept to a minimum.

It is hoped that by presenting the plight of these three patients, similar occurrences might be avoided. The eradication of these stains will require excision with grafting, serial excision or the embarkation on a programme of tissue expansion. Inevitably the resultant scars will be much larger than originally intended.

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References


Anal burning and peppermint oil

Sir,

Enteric-coated peppermint oil capsules are widely used in the treatment of abdominal colic, particularly in the irritable bowel syndrome,1 because of their effects on intestinal smooth muscle activity.2 I wish to record a significant side effect.

A 28 year old medical registrar contracted Salmonella enteritis, with bacteraemia, following the ingestion of contaminated food at a medical conference. He was admitted to hospital where on the third day, his stool frequency was 20 liquid motions per day. There was perianal soreness but no other anal pathology. A peppermint oil capsule was taken orally. Within three hours severe burning pain was experienced in the anus on defaecation persisting for 20 minutes before gradually subsiding. A strong odour of peppermint was evident. The following day a further capsule was ingested with the same result. On this occasion the partly destroyed capsule was easily identified in a bedpan 2 hours 40 minutes after ingestion.

The patient has recovered and with a stool frequency of 1 formed motion per day and on a normal diet has been able to tolerate peppermint oil capsules with no ill effects.

This severe but short lived side effect has not been specifically reported before though mention is made of similar symptoms at high dosage.3 It is felt that the unusual severity in this patient was due to a combination of the poor state of the anal mucosa after frequent bowel actions and the delivery of a high concentration of unabsorbed menthol to the anus as a result of rapid whole-bowel transit time.

This case has been reported to the Committee on the Safety of Medicines.

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References