

Cutaneous Manifestation of GI disease  
Dr. Gurbir Dhadwal, M.D. FRCPC, FAAD

- Pyoderma gangrenosum
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – Ulcers, often purple to grey border, with overhanging edge
    - Biopsy for H&E from the edge of the lesion
    - Biopsy for bacterial, deep fungal, atypical mycobacterial culture
  - GI association
    - Crohn's and Ulcerative colitis
  - Non-GI associations
    - Inflammatory arthritis, hematological malignancy – especially AML/CML, MGUS/myeloma
  - Management
    - Topical steroids
    - Topical calcineurin inhibitors
    - Intralesional kenalog
    - Systemic therapies for mild disease – dapsone, colchicine
    - Systemic therapies for severe disease – prednisone, cyclosporine, anti-TNF, but there are reports with many other steroid sparing agents
- Cutaneous Crohn's disease
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – ulcers, often “knife like” in the inguinal folds
    - Biopsy for H&E from the edge of the lesion
    - Biopsy for bacterial, deep fungal, atypical mycobacterial culture
  - GI association
    - Crohn's disease
  - Management
    - Topical steroids
    - Topical calcineurin inhibitors
    - Intralesional kenalog
    - Treat as Crohn's
- Sweet syndrome
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – Edematous erythematous non scaling papules and plaques
    - Biopsy for H&E from a thick lesion
    - Often flu like symptoms and febrile
    - Often neutrophilia
    - Can have involvement of any organ
  - GI associations
    - Crohn's and Ulcerative colitis
  - Non-GI associations
    - Infections
      - Strep, Hep B, Hep C, HIV, almost any infection including viral URTI

- Malignancies
      - Almost any, but more hematological especially AML
    - Drugs
      - G-CSF, anti-biotics
    - Autoimmune disorders
      - Connective tissue
      - Sarcoidosis
      - Behcet's
  - Management
    - Prednisone 0.5-1mg/kg x 2-6 weeks, then taper over 2-3 months
    - Anti-neutrophilic agents – colchicine, dapsone
    - Treat the underlying cause
- Erythema nodosum
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – tender erythematous dermal nodules on the anterior legs; lesions tend to pit with pressure
    - Biopsy – H&E from the most inflamed edematous lesion
  - GI association
    - Crohn's and Ulcerative colitis
  - Management
    - NSAIDS, leg elevation, potassium iodide, colchicine, anti-TNF
- Dermatitis herpetiformis
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical - Intense pruritus of the extensor forearms, extensor legs and lower back, patients may give a history of fluid filled vesicles but almost never seen as very short lived
    - Anti-TTG, Biopsy for H&E
  - GI association
    - Celiac disease
  - Management
    - Dapsone → rapid improvement of the cutaneous disease, but does not treat the GI disease
- Scurvy
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – perifollicular purpura, and corkscrew hairs
    - Vitamin C levels
  - GI association
    - GI blood loss
  - Management
    - Vitamin C
- Kaposi Sarcoma
  - Diagnosis
    - Violaceous macules, papules, and nodules of skin and oral mucosa

- Often hemorrhagic
    - Classic variant mainly on the legs of elderly men
    - HIV associated – can be present on the face
    - Biopsy for H&E
  - GI association
    - GI Kaposi sarcoma → bleeding
  - Management
    - Chemo/radiation
- Hereditary hemorrhagic telangiectasia
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – telangiectases on the face, oral mucosa including the tongue, and acral surfaces, history of nose bleeds, often a family history
    - Can have a history of pulmonary artery hypertension with/without pulmonary Arterio-venous malformations
  - GI association
    - Arterio-venous malformations of the upper GI tract → Upper GI bleeds
- Pseudoxanthoma elasticum
  - Diagnosis
    - Clinical – yellow papules and plaques on the neck and the antecubital/popliteal fossa
    - Biopsy for H&E
    - Angioid streaks in the eye
    - hypertension, premature atherosclerosis, vascular/valvular calcification
    - uterine hemorrhage
  - GI
    - Upper and lower GI hemorrhages
  - Management
    - Need ophthalmological, GI, cardiology follow up