

Insulin suspension isophane/insulin

Acanthosis nigricans: 2 case reports

Two patients developed acanthosis nigricans while receiving insulin suspension isophane/insulin [Human Mixtard; Mixtard 30 FlexPen] for type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM).

A 21-year-old woman had been receiving insulin suspension isophane/insulin injections 10 units administered by her father to the posterior aspect of both upper arms, twice daily for 16 years. She presented with two well-defined brownish-black, velvety to verrucous plaques measuring 3 × 5cm on the back of both upper arms. Her father could not recall when the lesions had appeared. The histological findings of a punch biopsy taken from a lesion were consistent with acanthosis nigricans [outcome not stated].

A 25-year-old man with T1DM presented with asymptomatic hyperpigmented lesions surrounding his umbilicus. He had been self-administering insulin suspension isophane/insulin injections over the periumbilical region for the past 2 years [dosage not stated]. The lesions developed at the start of treatment, and had darkened gradually over time. Brownish-black, velvety plaques were seen in the periumbilical area on examination. Findings from a lesional punch biopsy showed features characteristic of acanthosis nigricans [outcome not stated].

Author comment: "This report illustrates an uncommon cutaneous side effect of incorrectly administered insulin, that is, [acanthosis nigricans] in young T1DM patients".

Sawatkar G, et al. Acanthosis nigricans - An uncommon cutaneous adverse effect of a common medication: Report of two cases. Indian Journal of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology 79: 553, No. 4, 2013. Available from: URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4103/0378-6323.113112> - India 803092426