
Letter to the Editor

Horizontal Pigmented Nail Bands During Daunorubicin Treatment

To the Editor,

We are presenting a 12 years old male patient with acute myeloblastic leukemia-M1. A whole blood count showed a hemoglobin concentration of 7.1 g/dL, white cell count 82.000/mm³, and platelets 24.000/mm³. No signs of bleeding had so far occurred. The patient was treated with AML-BFM-93 chemotherapy regimen which contain daunorubicin, cytosine arabinoside and VP-16 (ADE Phase). Horizontal hyperpigmentation in the fingernails occurred 15 days after completion of chemotherapy (Figure 1). Mucous membranes were normal.



Figure 1. Horizontal pigmented nail bands.

In the literature limited cases were reported about daunorubicin and hyperpigmentation of fingernails. Hyperpigmentation of the fingernails, which occurs after an interval of some weeks or months therapy with daunorubicin, varies from diffuse to horizontal or longitudinal streaks. Reversal of nail pigmentation some months after withdrawal of the drug is usual. Skin or mucous membrane pigmentation may coexist. The mechanism of pigmentation remains obscure. The pigment is believed to be melanin, and both patterns disappeared with discontinuation of therapy and subsequent nail growth. These changes are observed more frequently in black than in white patients. In some instances, they have been recorded in several members of the same family.

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