

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Exanthema fixum Due to Ultraviolet Radiation

Sir,

A recent short report in your Journal discussed an interesting presentation of a fixed eruption due to ultra-violet light radiation (1). Investigation by Langeland showed that this eruption could be induced by both UVB radiation and UVA radiation. In his discussion Dr. Langeland was apparently unaware of a study by Emmett (2). Emmett's case was of a 40-year-old lady who had a fixed eruption on her face which was produced solely by UVA radiation. UVB radiation had no effect. I note that Langeland in his discussion concedes that his UVB

radiation testing may have been contaminated by small amounts of UVA radiation.

REFERENCES

1. Langeland, J.: Exanthema fixum due to ultraviolet radiation. *Acta Dermatovener (Stockholm)* 62: 169, 1982.
2. Emmett, Edward A.: Fixed long ultraviolet eruption. *Arch Dermatol* 111: 212, 1975.

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Demodex folliculorum in Human Skin

Sir,

In an interesting short report, Bøge-Rasmussen and co-workers (1) report a high incidence of *Demodex folliculorum* in the skin of normal persons. However, they state that it is generally believed that *Demodex folliculorum* is rare in humans. On the contrary, most textbooks (e.g. 2, 3) declare that this mite frequently is found within hair follicles. Furthermore, in contrast to the view of Bøge-Rasmussen and co-workers, *Demodex folliculorum* is easily recognized in ordinary histologic slides, as is also beautifully illustrated in many textbooks.

Demodex can also be visualized more specifically by staining with alkaline Congo red (4). When viewed in polarized light, the kitin envelope of the mite exhibits a green birefringence of the same quality as amyloid (Fig. 1). This technique can be used in cases when a differentiation between a mite and other structures is difficult.

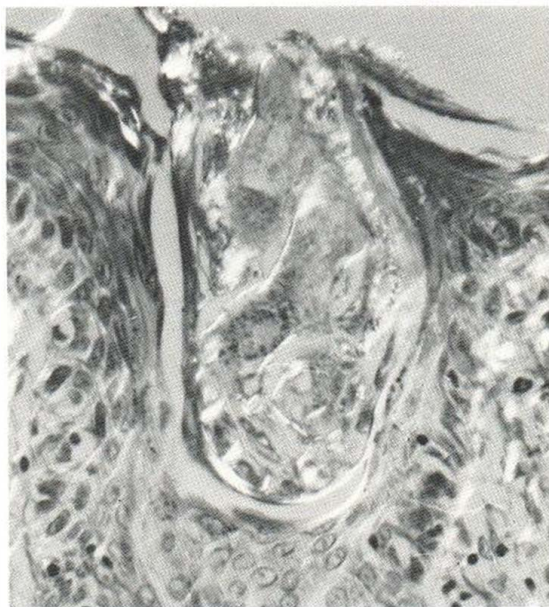


Fig. 1. Two *Demodex folliculorum* mites in a hair follicle, exhibiting a bright green birefringence. Congo red between crossed polars. $\times 300$.

REFERENCES

1. Bøge-Rasmussen, T., Christensen, J. D., Glud, B., Kristensen, G. & Norn, M. S.: Demodex folliculorum hominis (Simon): Incidence in a normomaterial and in patients under systemic treatment with erythromycin or glucocorticoid. *Acta Dermatovener (Stockholm)* 62: 454, 1982.
2. Allen, A. C.: *The Skin. A Clinicopathologic Treatise*, 1048 pp. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis 1954.
3. Ackerman, A. B.: *Histologic Diagnosis of Inflammatory Skin Diseases*, 863 pp. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia 1978.
4. Puchtler, H., Sweat, F. & Levine, M.: On the binding of Congo red by amyloid. *J Histochem Cytochem* 10: 355, 1962.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advances in Skin Pharmacology: Recent Methods. The 4th CIRD Symposium will be held at Sophia Antipolis, near Nice, on 21st to 23rd October, 1983. The aim of the Symposium will be to examine methods linking cell and animal experiments with clinical experience. The presentations will be divided into 3 sessions: New in vitro approaches. Recently developed animal models. Clinical aspects. The symposium will be organized by M. Greaves, L. Juhlin, M. Prunieras, H. Schaefer and B. Shroot. Abstracts of up to 300 words should be sent as soon as possible and not later than May 15, 1983, to Prof. Hans Schaefer, Centre International de Recherches Dermatologiques, F-06565 Valbonne, France.

Gold Medal 1983 of the Foundation for Allergy Research in Europe (F.A.R.E.). The F.A.R.E. bestows a Gold Medal every 3 years for scientific work of practical clinical relevance in the field of allergy research. The next Gold Medal will be awarded during the XIIth Congress of the European Academy of Allergology and Clinical Immunology in Rome, September 25–30, 1983. This occasion will be combined with a guest lecture by the prize-winner. — The topic chosen by the F.A.R.E. for the Gold Medal 1983 is "Importance of Immuno-

complexes in Clinical Allergy". Participation is open to young scientists working in Europe, independent of their nationality or their type of work (clinic, institute, private practice). Unpublished or recently published papers about the chosen topic may be submitted under the condition that they have not been submitted elsewhere for a prize or similar award. — Applications together with a *curriculum vitae* and the list of publications, should be in the hands of the secretary, Prof. B. Wüthrich, Allergiestation, Dermatologische Universitätsklinik, Gloriastrasse 31, CH-8091 Zürich, Switzerland, before 1st May, 1983.

The Annual Meeting of the British Society for Investigative Dermatology will take place in the University of Nottingham on September 30–October 1, 1983. (See announcement in no. 1, 1983, of this journal). *Attention!* Change of date for submission of manuscripts. "Abstracts should be submitted on the new official form and must be received by Dr. R. A. J. Eady by *June 17th, 1983.*" For further information and abstract forms, please write to: Dr. R. A. J. Eady, Chairman, B.S.I.D., Institute of Dermatology, Homerton Grove, London E9 6BX, England.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Andrews' Diseases of the Skin—Clinical Dermatology, 7th edition, by A. N. Domonkos, H. L. Arnold and R. B. Odom. W. B. Saunders. Price £45.00.

Current Dermatologic Therapy by Stuart Maddin, ed. W. B. Saunders. Price £43.00.