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Blastocystis, urticaria, and skin disorders: review of the current evidences

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Abstract

Blastocystis is one of the most common intestinal protozoan parasites worldwide, which is linked to cutaneous lesions and urticaria. In a setting of systematic review, the data on the association of Blastocystis infection with cutaneous lesions were searched in order to summarize the main clinical symptoms, diagnostic methods, treatment, and outcome of the patients. The search identified 28 eligible articles, including 12 cross-sectional studies and 16 case reports/case series (including 23 cases). A diverse spectrum of skin symptoms, mainly urticaria, rash, and itching, was reported from the studies. Of the 23 infected cases with the skin symptoms, gastrointestinal symptoms were reported from the 16 cases, whereas 7 cases with urticaria had asymptomatic infection. The most frequent subtypes were ST1, ST2, and ST3, respectively. Metronidazole, paromomycin, and tinidazole were the most prescribed drugs in patients with single Blastocystis infection. Notably, urticaria and other cutaneous symptoms of all treated patients were resolved after treatment. In conclusion, this study indicates that Blastocystis infection can be a neglected cause of urticaria and skin disorders. Since the treatment of Blastocystis infection is simple, screening and treatment of this infection should be considered in patients with urticaria and other skin disorders.

Keywords: Blastocystis; Cutaneous lesions; Skin disorders; Urticaria.

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