Giant Syringomas: A Case Report

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We report a case of a 71-year-old man with multiple localized giant syringomas on the upper and lower eyelids. Few cases have been reported of syringomas with a diameter greater than 5 mm.

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Case Report

A 71-year-old man presented with multiple growths around his eyes of 2 to 3 years' duration. These lesions were asymptomatic and had not been previously treated. On physical examination, he had grouped soft to moderately firm, flesh-colored papules on the eyelids. The lesions ranged in size from 3 to 10 mm (Figure 1).

A biopsy specimen demonstrated a desmoplastic stroma embedded with small ductular structures containing an epithelial lining. Some possessed extensions resembling tails, giving the ducts a tadpolelike appearance (Figure 2). On higher magnification, the ducts were shown to contain amorphous debris, and several of the epithelial cells appeared glycogenated (Figure 3). These features were diagnostic of a syringoma, more specifically a clear cell syringoma. This variant has been associated with diabetes mellitus but not in this case.

Upon learning of the benign nature of the lesions, the patient opted not to have them treated.

Comment

Syringomas are benign adnexal neoplasms derived from the intraepidermal ductal portion of the eccrine gland.[1] These lesions typically occur in women during puberty or early adulthood, though they may develop as late as the sixth or seventh decade. They are most commonly found on the periocular and upper maxillary areas of the face, with less frequent appearances on the thighs, axillae, chest, abdomen, genitalia, and buttocks.[1] Clinically, they present as small, clustered, flesh-colored to slightly yellowish or translucent papules, arranged in a symmetrical distribution, with

Figure 1. Grouped 3- to 10-mm, soft to moderately firm, flesh-colored papules symmetrically distributed on the eyelids.

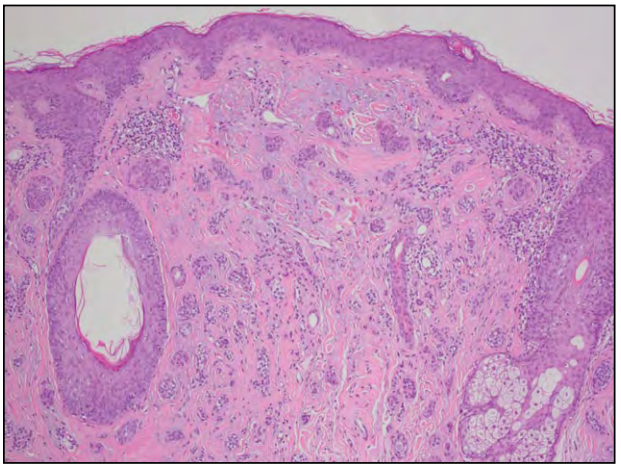

Figure 2. A desmoplastic stroma containing tadpolelike ductular structures characteristic of syringomas (H&E, original magnification ×10).

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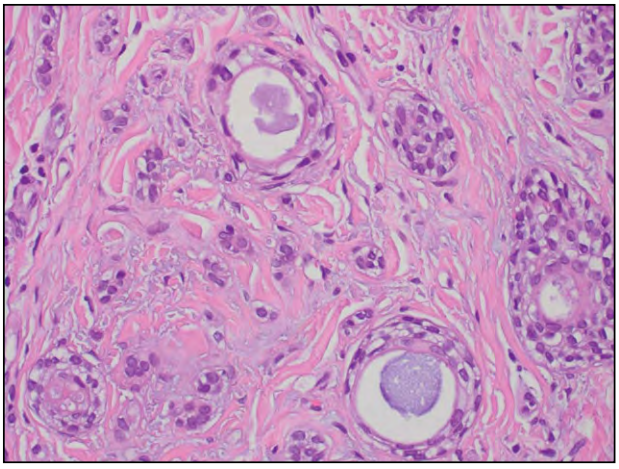

Figure 3. Ductular structures lined by glycogenated epithelial cells (H&E, original magnification ×100).

each papule characteristically ranging in size from 1 to 2 mm.[2]

According to a PubMed search of articles indexed for MEDLINE using the terms *syringoma* and *syringomas*, there have only been 3 prior reports of syringomas measuring greater than 5 mm in diameter, with 2 occurring on the eyelids[3,4] and 1 occurring on the vulva,[5] all of which presented as solitary lesions. The term *giant syringoma* was proposed by the authors of the latter case to indicate syringomas measuring greater than 5 mm.[5] Although syringomas usually are clinically diagnosed, unusual cases such as the one presented herein necessitate histologic confirmation. Due to the size of the lesions, we wanted to rule out xanthomas and the remote possibility of necrobiotic xanthogranulomas.

Xanthomas can sometimes have a similar clinical presentation as syringomas; however, microscopically they appear quite different. Syringomas have a distinct histology consisting of a fibrous stroma embedded with multiple small ductal structures, each lined by 2 rows of epithelial cells, with some forming tails characteristically shaped as tadpoles or commas.[1] Although syringomas can commonly be clinically diagnosed, there are instances in which further diagnostic means are necessary based on unusual morphology or location of the lesions. Because of their unique histology, they can be identified definitively via microscopic examination.

Syringomas are benign lesions that only require treatment if the patient deems them to be aesthetically unacceptable. Current options involve mainly surgical techniques including excision, dermabrasion, electrosurgery with and without curettage, CO_2 laser, and more recently electrocoagulation.[6]

Our patient presented with multiple grouped giant syringomas localized to the upper and lower eyelids. Because of their unusual presentation, a final diagnosis had to be made via histologic examination, which showed the characteristic findings of a syringoma. Because of the paucity of reports of syringomas of this size, we would like to propagate the term *giant syringoma* to indicate syringomas with a diameter greater than 5 mm, which can present as both solitary and multiple lesions.

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