

CLINICAL VISTAS BRIEF

What's your call?

A 43-year-old man with pustular erythematous lesions of 1 day's duration that developed at the site of minor scratches.

See page 1276 for diagnosis.

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Pathergy

This man sustained a few minor scratches by accident. Over the next day, pustular erythematous lesions developed at these sites.

Pathergy describes a nonspecific skin hyperreactivity and is one of the diagnostic criteria for Behçet's disease; however, only a minority of Behçet's patients show signs of pathergy.

Behçet's disease is a multisystem inflammatory disorder with mucocutaneous, ocular, intestinal, articular, vascular, urogenital and neurologic involvement.¹ It is particularly common among people who have the HLA-B51 major histocompatibility type. The clinical features of Behçet's disease include recurrent oral aphthous ulcerations, skin and eye lesions, and genital ulcerations. There is no pathognomonic laboratory test. Cutaneous lesions include pustules, erythema nodosum-like lesions, Sweet's syndrome-like lesions, pyoderma gangrenosum-like lesions and pathergy. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents, immunosuppressants, corticosteroids and colchicines are the mainstay of treatment, although the choice of treatments is dictated by the symptoms.²

Vishal Madan

John Lear

The Dermatology Centre

Hope Hospital

Salford and Central Manchester and

Children's Hospitals NHS Trust

Manchester, United Kingdom

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