Nail Dystrophy Associated with AL Amyloidosis

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Picture 1. The fingernails are dystrophic with longitudinal striations.

AL amyloidosis is a fatal systemic disorder due to plasma cell dyscrasia. The cutaneous lesions occur in up to 40% of patients with AL amyloidosis (1). The cutaneous findings include purpura and ecchymoses, waxy papules, nodules or plaques, pigmentary changes, scleroderma-like thickening of the skin, bullous lesions, alopecia and nail dystrophy (1, 2). Here, we describe a rare case of nail dystrophy associated with AL amyloidosis.

A 62-year-old man admitted with congestive heart failure and was diagnosed as AL amyloidosis by myocardial and skin biopsy. There was no evidence of multiple myeloma. His cutaneous manifestations were as follows: multiple purpura on the chin and neck, thin nail plate with longitudinal striations in all fingernails and toenails (Fig. 1). He had been known to have a change in the nails at least two years earlier, however he was untreated due to the lack of symptoms.

Nail dystrophy is caused by amyloid deposition in the nail bed and nail fold (3). On occasion, nail dystrophy can be an early manifestation of AL amyloidosis (3). Physicians carefully pay attention to nail changes.

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