Lipodystrophy Caused by Repetitive Pegylated Interferon Injection

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Key words: lipodystrophy, pegylated interferon, chronic hepatitis C

(DOI: 10.2169/internalmedicine.52.0763)

A 55-year-old woman was referred to our hospital for treatment of chronic hepatitis C. Her hepatitis C virus (HCV) genotype was 1a and the serum HCV RNA level was 3.3 Log IU/mL; hence, a 48-week course of treatment with 180 μg of s.c. pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered weekly was initiated. The treatment was administered with only minor flu-like symptoms, until the patient found an area of slight localized skin depression and redness on the lateral part of her right arm, which corresponded to the injection site used in week 24. The injection site was not changed, and the 48-week therapy was completed. Although the patient exhibited a sustained virological response, dull pain developed at the injection site 15 months after the end of treatment, and the skin depression worsened until one year after the end of therapy than remained unchanged thereafter (Picture 1). T2-weighted MRI of the right arm revealed thinning of the subdermal adipose tissue and slight atrophy of the triceps muscle at the injection site (Picture 2).

The authors state that they have no Conflict of Interest (COI).