Scarlet Fever in an Adult

Satoshi Kutsuna, Kayoko Hayakawa and Norio Ohmagari

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Picture 1.

Picture 2.

Picture 3.

Picture 4.

A 29-year-old French man living in Tokyo presented to our emergency department with a fever, sore throat and rash. His tongue had a white coating (Picture 1), and diffuse erythema (Picture 2) that blanched on pressure was noted over the neck and trunk. A rapid streptococcal antigen test of the pharynx was positive; thus, treatment with penicillin was initiated. On the third day of treatment, the white coating on the patient's tongue disappeared and the characteris-

tic strawberry-red tongue appeared (Picture 3). A throat culture became positive for *Streptococcus pyogenes*. The patient was diagnosed with scarlet fever and completed a 10-day course of treatment. The rash eventually desquamated (Picture 4). Scarlet fever is a pediatric disease, as most of the population acquires the antitoxin when they are affected by *Streptococcus*, and is rarely seen in adults (1). Even in adult patients, physicians should be aware of the characteris-

tic appearance of a strawberry-red tongue that is initially covered with a white coat (2).

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

References

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