Imported Tungiasis in a Non-endemic Country

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A 60-year-old woman who returned from a month-long trip to rural areas in Ecuador visited our hospital due to a painful wartlike bump on her toe that had developed a week earlier. The lesion was whitish and edematous, and we suspected a skin abscess. Samples of degenerative tissue and a whitish lesion (Picture 1) were obtained by incision and drainage. No arthropod carcass was found macroscopically, but a mass of eggs of Tunga penetrans was identified in the lesion sample after potassium hydroxide (KOH) preparation (Picture 2). The lesion was treated by lavage with saline and the application of an ointment containing antibiotics in the cavity. Tungiasis is a parasitic skin disease found in the tropical parts of South America, Caribbean and Africa (1) but is totally unrecognized in Japan and other non-endemic countries (2). The KOH test is helpful for the diagnosis of tungiasis. Clinicians should bear in mind the possibility of tungiasis in patients with skin nodules who have recently returned from tropical regions.

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References
