

Abstract

Background: Leprosy is caused by *Mycobacterium leprae* and commonly present as neurocutaneous manifestations like hypopigmented or reddish patches with loss of sensation and tender thickened peripheral nerves. Vasculitis-like presentations with skin ulcers and neuropathy are noted in rare cases. We report a case of lepromatous leprosy presented as vasculitis rash over the lower limb.

Case presentation: Mr Laksman, a 49-year old previously well male patient from Rajagiriya presented with vasculitic rash of both lower limbs for 5 days duration with 8 month history of bilateral asymmetrical numbness of both upper and lower limbs. On examinations there was mild bilateral ankle oedema with none tender none blanching erythematous macular papular vasculitic type rash seen over the bilateral lower limbs prominently plantar surface without ulceration or bullous formation. There were hypopigmented plaque lesions with bilateral ear infiltration and generalized thickening and tenderness of nerves. Slit skin smear positive for leprosy and skin biopsy confirmed the vasculitic reaction with lepromatous leprosy. Other common causes of vasculitis were excluded. He was diagnosed as borderline leprosy with type 2 lepra reaction and started on multibacillary multi drug treatment for leprosy with iv antibiotics and found to have a good response.

Conclusion: Leprosy can manifest as two common types of immunological reactions known as type 1 and type 2. Lucio phenomenon is a rare type of a cutaneous vasculitic process involving medium and small-sized vessels and foam cells with lepra bacilli seen inside. This case may be an early presentation of a Lucio phenomenon as patient presented early.

Key words: leprosy, vasculitis, lepra reaction, lucio phenomenon