

A Rare Case of Borderline Tuberculoid Hansens with Bilateral Facial Nerve Palsy

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I. Introduction

Leprosy is essentially a disease of the nerves. Most of the complications associated with the disease are due to involvement and damage to nerves. Bilateral lower motor neuron facial nerve paralysis is a rare phenomenon. Leprosy, one of the most important causes of peripheral neuropathy in endemic countries can give rise to bilateral incomplete facial nerve paralysis¹.

II. Case Report

A 29 year old male, presented with multiple skin patches over face, trunk and extremities since 9 months and inability to close eyes for past 1 month. On examination multiple erythematous well defined shiny plaques were present over face, neck, trunk and extremities. On attempting gentle eye closure, eyelids did not approximate and there was bilateral Bell's phenomenon. Bilateral supraorbital, infra orbital, ulnar, common peroneal and posterior tibial nerves were enlarged and tender. Skin biopsy from lesion over left arm showed changes suggestive of Borderline tuberculoid leprosy. A slit skin smear from both ears and lesion on face Showed 2+ Bacteriological Index.

III. Discussion

Facial nerve involvement in leprosy is reported to occur in about 10%² of the patients and is the most common cranial nerve affected. Facial patches and type 1 lepra reaction have been recognized as risk factors for the facial nerve involvement. The anatomical location of the zygomatic and temporal branches of facial nerve makes them easily involved in the overlying leprosy lesion on the face³, this gives rise to visible bell's phenomenon demonstrable on gentle closure of eyes.

IV. Conclusion

Though reported rarely, In endemic countries leprosy should be considered as an important cause of bilateral lower motor neuron facial paralysis especially in patients presenting with isolated unexplained cranial nerve symptoms

References

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FIGURE - A



FIGURE - B



FIGURE - C



FIGURE - D

FIGURE A & B – Shows Hansen's plaque around eyes.

FIGURE -C – Bilateral Lagophthalmos

FIGURE - D – Bilateral Bell's phenomena



FIGURE - E

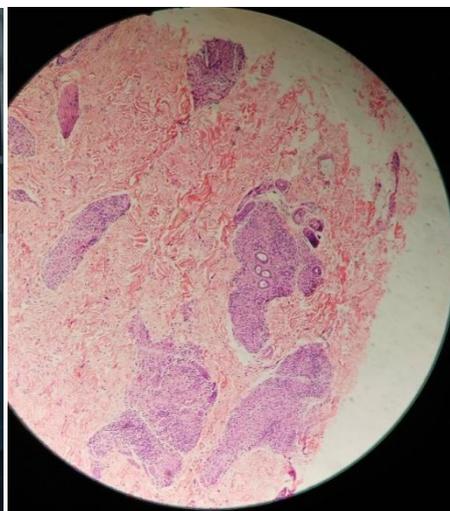


FIGURE - F

FIGURE -E – Hansen's Plaque Over The Left Arm

FIGURE -F –Tuberculoid Granuloma InHistopathological Examination