

Letter to the Editor

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Multiple Cysts Localized to the Vulva: A Case Report

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KEYWORDS: Genital cysts; Vulvarcysts; Vulvar benign tumors.

Epidermal, or inclusion cysts, are the commonest type of epithelial cysts of the skin. These are keratin-containing cysts lined with stratified squamous epithelium. Multiple vulvar cysts are rarely reported.^{1,2}

A 61-year-old woman presented to the dermatology outpatient clinic for lesions on the vulva of about 25-years duration. On physical examination the patient exhibited multiple yellow cystic papules and nodules measuring less than 1 cm each on the labia majora (Figure 1). Histopathological examination revealed a keratinous cyst lined by stratified squamous lining consistent with epidermal cysts. The patient was referred to surgeon for excision.



Figure 1: Multiple yellowish cystic papules or nodules on the labia majora measuring less than 1 cm.

DISCUSSION

Epidermal, or inclusion cysts, are the commonest type of epithelial cysts of the skin. These are keratin-containing cysts lined with stratified squamous epithelium. Multiple vulvar cysts are rarely reported.^{1,2}

Epidermal cysts, mistakenly called sebaceous cysts, are formed as result of invagination of keratinized squamous epithelium and common sites of presentation are face, trunk, neck, extremities or scalp but genital cysts are less common. Clinical presentation of genital cysts can be single or multiple. When they are multiple demonstrate characteristic yellow-white papules, typically measure 2-5 mm.³ Vulvar epidermoid cysts have been reported to be localized on the clitoral region (sometimes after female genital mutilation), labia majora and rarely on labium minus.^{4,5} The differential diagnosis for papular/tumour genital lesions include cystic lesions (mucous cyst, cysts of the canal of Nuck, Bartholin's cyst, Skene's duct cyst), molluscum contagiosum, lichen nitidus, steatocystoma multiplex, milia, and calcinosis cutis. Other benign solid tumors, mesenchymal tumors, or malignant tumors of the vulva though rare, should be considered.^{3,4} Steatocystoma multiplex is an autosomal dominant disorder characterized by multiple dermal cysts that are lined by epithelium containing hair follicles and sebaceous glands.⁶ Cases of sporadic steatocystoma multiplex and multiple primary milia confined to the vulva have been recently described.^{7,8} Idiopathic calcinosis, defined as the deposition of

insoluble calcium salts under epidermis, has been rarely reported on the vulva.⁹

Multiple epidermal cysts are not symptomatic but sometimes excision is required for cosmetic reasons or recurrent infection and can have a detrimental effect on quality of life of patients. Laser therapy could be an effective alternative to the surgical treatment.^{2,10}

CONCLUSIONS

It is important consider benign vulvar cysts in the differential diagnosis of vulvar complaints. Although most of pathological lesions that affect the vulva are benign, it is important to rule out a carcinoma or premalignant lesions. Vulvar cysts can adversely affect the quality of life of women.

CONSENT

The patient has provided written permission for publication of the case details.

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