

## “Whip Lash” Skin Lesions Caused by Bleomycin Therapy

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A 43-year-old man had presented in October 2016 with fever, weight loss and enlarged right cervical lymph nodes for 5 months. He was diagnosed with classical Hodgkin lymphoma (stage-IIIB) and was started on Adriamycin, Bleomycin, Vinblastine and Dacarbazine chemotherapy. In February 2017, 10 days after completion of fourth cycle of ABVD chemotherapy, he was noted to have asymptomatic, linear (flagellate), hyperpigmented skin lesions resembling “whip lashes” over the trunk (Fig. 1), upper and lower limbs. Bleomycin was omitted from subsequent two cycles of chemotherapy.

Bleomycin toxicity involves mainly lungs and skin. Dermatologic adverse effects reported with bleomycin include hyperkeratosis, alopecia, Raynaud’s phenomenon, palmoplantar desquamation/ulceration, eczematoid/sclerodermoid lesions, nailbed changes and the characteristic, albeit rare flagellate rash [1]. Flagellate rash is a dose-independent adverse effect characterized by linear, intermingled, erythematous streaks resembling “whip lash” marks. There is no characteristic distribution and rash may involve face, trunk and extremities. The rash may resolve completely or heal with hyperpigmentation, which may persist longer. The rash has been suggested as a fixed drug eruption resulting from bleomycin extravasation and accumulation in skin. Rash may follow bleomycin use for



**Fig. 1** Linear, hyperpigmented skin lesions resembling “whip lashes” on the anterior trunk

chemical pleurodesis and sclerotherapy as well. Severe and extensive rash necessitates bleomycin discontinuation [2]. Index patient continued to be in remission at the latest follow-up in December 2017 and rash had partly faded.

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**Compliance with Ethical Standards**

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Ethical Approval** This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.

**Informed Consent** Informed consent was obtained from the patient included in the case.

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