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## MARCH IOTADERMA (#301)

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Spice names are sometimes used in the descriptions of dermatologic diseases. For example, **cayenne pepper** is found in Schamberg's disease, **nutmeg** grater in lichen amyloidosis, and **salt** and **pepper** in scleroderma. Where would a dermatologist find "**cloves**" used?

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Answer will appear in the JAAD Online section of the April issue of the Journal.

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## FEBRUARY IOTADERMA (#300)

**Question:** Other than on a pool table (or maybe during an undergraduate physics course lab exercise) when and why might a dermatologist encounter a "billiard ball?"

**Answer:** "Billiard ball" has been used for many years regarding the description of an uncommon manifestation of tertiary syphilis.<sup>1-3</sup> It refers to the usually slow and painless enlargement of a testicle due to the presence of gummas. Upon palpation the testis is found to be firm, sometimes "wooden," and feels heavy.<sup>2,3</sup> Usually only one testicle is involved with gummas, but sometimes both are affected. Pathologic examination reveals an extensive obliterative endarteritis with perivascular lymphocytes and plasma cells. If the condition is bilateral the fibrous scarring can eventuate in sterility due to a diffuse sort of tubular atrophy.<sup>4</sup> The diagnostic serologic tests for syphilis are all positive. The differential diagnoses should include diverse testicular neoplasms, gonococcal or nonspecific epididymitis, tuberculosis, and even mumps orchitis.<sup>2,3</sup> The preferred therapy is IM penicillin at appropriate dosages, and on occasion the indurations have resolved.

## REFERENCES

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4. Robbins SL. *Pathology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed) 1968. p. 1085. Saunders: Philadelphia.

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