

Reply to: “Response to: ‘Patients with negative patch tests: Retrospective analysis of North American Contact Dermatitis Group (NACDG) data 2001-2016’”



To the Editor: We appreciate the interest in this study and the opportunity to respond. Pigmented contact dermatitis presents as hyperpigmentation with little or no evidence of eczematous dermatitis. It may be difficult to distinguish from phototoxic reactions or postinflammatory hyperpigmentation. Pigmented contact dermatitis was originally described by Osmundsen¹ in Denmark, who attributed the melanosis to pyrazoline derivatives in an optical whitening clothing detergent. Pigmented cosmetic dermatitis is a subtype of pigmented contact dermatitis and was first described in Japanese women; patch testing with patients' cosmetics resulted in pigmented patch test reactions.² Japanese cosmetic companies have since removed many of the responsible ingredients (fragrances, pigments, and carbanilides), so this is now relatively rare.³ Recently, cases of pigmented contact dermatitis have been associated with red kumkum in India. This powdered dye is typically applied to the forehead for social and religious reasons and contains a number of allergens including azo dyes, coal tar dyes, toluidine red, fragrance, turmeric, and botanical extracts.^{4,5} The North American Contact Dermatitis Group (NACDG) does not specifically collect data on pigmented contact dermatitis, so we cannot comment on the prevalence of this condition. Anecdotally, it seems rare in the United States.

Almost all patients patch tested by the NACDG have final readings at day 5 or later. Most patients are provided with instructions to call the clinic if a late reaction occurs (beyond the final reading), but this information is not collected separately in the database. Certainly, repeat open application tests are important in confirming or ruling out suspected culprits, and they are commonly used.⁶

Data on repeat open application tests performed in NACDG patients, however, are not collected as part of the database, so we cannot provide detailed data on this.

Thank you again for the interest in this study.

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