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**A Case of Dermatomyositis Revealed by Generalized Edema**

**INTRODUCTION**

Edematous dermatomyositis (DM) is a rare clinical subtype of DM characterized by localized or generalized subcutaneous edema. Only 34 cases have been reported between 1988 and 2023. We present a case of DM revealed by generalized edema.

**CASE REPORT**

A 66-year-old woman with a history of well-controlled hypothyroidism on Levothyrox was admitted with a 3-month history of generalized edema, followed by the appearance of specific DM-related skin lesions (lilac eyelid erythema, heliotrope rash on the neckline, manicure sign, and poikilodermic lesions). Gradually, she developed a myogenic syndrome with predominant proximal muscle weakness, dysphagia, and vocal cord involvement.

Laboratory tests confirmed biological rhabdomyolysis, while electromyography revealed a myogenic syndrome. Muscle MRI showed inflammatory myopathy. Common causes of generalized edema were ruled out.

Muscle biopsy confirmed the diagnosis of DM, supported by immunological findings showing positive anti-TIF1γ antibodies. Screening for associated malignancy was negative.

Given the severity of her DM, the patient was treated with corticosteroids (three IV pulses of 500 mg followed by 1 mg/kg/day orally) and three courses of immunoglobulins (2 g/kg at one-month intervals). This led to significant improvement within days, including reduction of edema, improved muscle strength, and resolution of skin lesions.

**DISCUSSION**

In DM, edema typically presents as periorbital swelling. In this patient, generalized edema was the initial manifestation, preceding skin lesions and severe muscle weakness. This delayed diagnosis, leading to a severe disease form requiring intensive treatment.

Literature review suggests that edema is linked to severe muscle involvement. The mechanism may involve increased capillary permeability due to immune complex deposition in capillaries.

**CONCLUSION**

Generalized edema is a rare DM manifestation and may indicate disease severity. Early diagnosis and aggressive treatment are essential for optimal management and disease control.

