

Unusual Gingival Erythema and Swelling

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Background:

Plasma cell gingivitis (PCG) is a rare benign condition of the gingiva. It is characterized by dense infiltration of polyclonal plasma cells. PCG is thought to be a hypersensitivity reaction, often to flavoring agents or spices. It causes gingival swelling, discomfort, and bleeding and may mimic more serious conditions such as malignancies. The diagnosis typically involves tissue biopsy, and treatment includes the elimination of the suspected antigen, corticosteroids, and occasionally, antibiotics.

CASE:

A 68-years-old female complained of oral mucosal redness, gingival swelling, loss of taste, and burning sensation present for the past year. The patient had been evaluated by multiple providers, including a primary care physician, dentist, oral surgeon, and had been treated with chlorhexidine rinses without benefits. Medical history includes hypertension, type 2 diabetes, fibromyalgia, and GERD. Medications include amlodipine 10mg daily and gabapentin 300mg daily. No known allergies were reported. The patient's family history includes leukemia in both parents. Examination showed severe and generalized gingival enlargement and erythema.

Discussion/Diagnosis:

Differential diagnosis included orofacial granulomatosis, leukemic infiltration, PCG, lichen planus, and mucous membrane pemphigoid. Biopsy of gingival tissue revealed spongiotic epithelium with marked vascularity and dense sheet of polyclonal plasma cell. The cumulative findings were consistent with the diagnosis of PCG. The patient was advised to avoid flavored diet and oral hygiene products to eliminate possible allergens. She was also prescribed dexamethasone solution 10mg/5ml to swish and spit. Three weeks after treatment, the lesions resolved.

CONCLUSIONS

PCG is a rare benign inflammatory condition of the oral mucosa considered to be a hypersensitivity reaction to diet, medications, or oral hygiene products. PCG can cause a diagnostic dilemma due to the non-specific presentation; therefore, a biopsy is always needed to confirm the diagnosis and rule out other conditions, including malignancies.



Figure 1



Figure 2

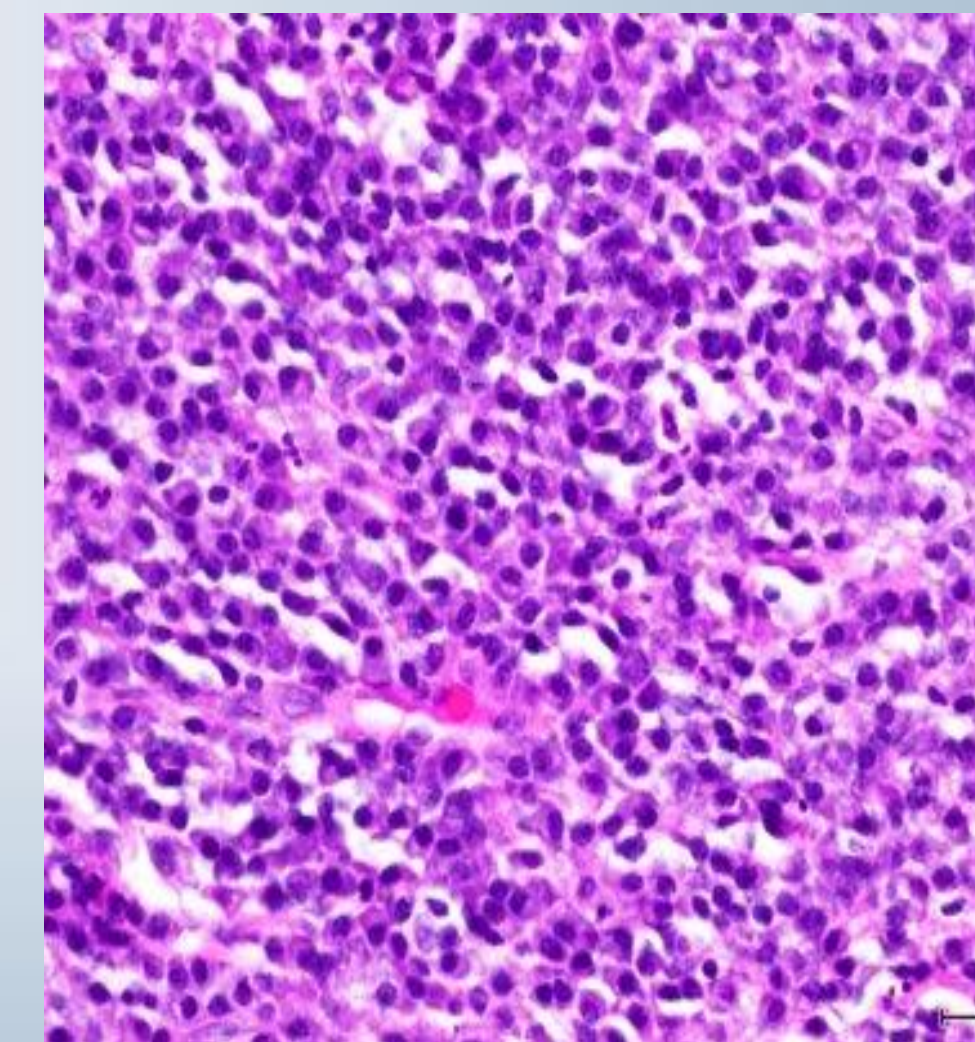


Figure 3