

# Particular Clinical-Therapeutic Aspects of Rhinophyma – Atypical Case Report

Andrei Liliana<sup>1</sup>, Bordeianu I<sup>2</sup>, Iordache IV<sup>2</sup>, Bratu I<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hypocrate Medical Center, Tulcea, Romania

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Medicine, Ovidius University, Constanța, Romania

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Pharmacy, Ovidius University, Constanța, Romania

The authors present a case of pseudotumoral rhinophyma with some specific and rare clinical, evolutionary and therapeutic aspects. Therapeutic indication was put on functional rather than cosmetic reasons, and surgery led to good functional and cosmetic results, accompanied by a fast spontaneous-directed epithelialization.

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## Introduction

Defined as hypertrophic acne nose, rhinophyma is a disease with obscure etiopathogenesis and increasing incidence, affects mostly men [1] after the age of 40, who meet several favorable circumstances: seborrhea, age, chronic use of alcohol [2], usually obese and possibly with a positive family history. Therapeutic indication and a specialist consultation are done, most often for esthetic reasons [3]. Rhinophyma treatment can be performed by two types of methods: a non-bleeding method or physical therapy consisting of local topical, successive electrocoagulation, electrolysis, etc. and a bleeding method which consists of tangential excisions and epithelialization, either spontaneously or in complete excision and coverage with free skin grafting (usually free split skin) [4]. Physiotherapy is recommended for early forms, with small tumors, while surgical treatment brings better cosmetic results [5]. Electric knife excision excludes one of the major impediments of surgical excision, which is heavy bleeding [1–3]; surgery was initiated in 1876 by Ollier.

## Clinical case report

We present the case of a 69 years old male patient, who states that 10–12 years ago he observed an aberrant growth of the nose skin, mostly on the tip of the nose. In time the lesion produces organic pain and the developing "tumors" lead to the obstruction of the nostrils, determining the patient to seek medical advice. Figures 1–4 present the patient's preoperative appearance.

Besides his age, the patient presents several other conditions which impose caution in case of surgical treatment, such as: type II diabetes (24 years old) with blood glucose levels between 160–340 mg/dl, arterial hypertension under treatment with maximum values between 160–200 mmHg, chronic heart ischemia and gr III obesity. After a multidisciplinary medical monitoring period, surgical intervention was performed in general anesthesia with orotracheal intubation (score ASA III) and electric scalpel ex-



Fig. 1. Preoperative appearance



Fig. 2. Preoperative appearance



Fig. 3. Preoperative appearance



Fig. 4. Preoperative appearance



Fig. 5. Postoperative appearance



Fig. 6. The removed part



Fig. 7. The patient's appearance 16 days after the operation



Fig. 8. The patient's appearance 16 days after the operation

cision was done to remove tumor formations. The removed parts were sent to histopathology test. Figure 5 presents the patient's postoperative appearance.

Postoperatively, the excised area was left with the intention of a possible second free skin grafting. The first band-

age was performed after 48 hours and later every 24 or 48 hours, using local topical treatment with antiseptic and stimulating epithelialization effect (Pancol, Biotitus Derma). The histopathologic test of the removed part (Figure 6) showed epithelial hyperplasia, sebaceous hyperplasia, ep-



idermis cysts and chorionic abundant. Postoperative evolution was favorable, and to our surprise the operated area presented a spontaneous-directed epithelialization within 16 days, with a good cosmetic result (Figures 7 and 8).

## Discussions

Rhinophyma, as a degenerative skin disease, evolves with the hypertrophy of the nasal pyramid soft tissue, causing mainly an aesthetic discomfort, which is why it is neglected in its general evolution. Most cases are observed in men from a rural area and are associated with alcohol consumption.

In our case, the main reason the patient sought medical advice was functional, the pseudotumoral rhinophyma obstructing his upper respiratory tract, especially the pyriform aperture. There were also psychological reasons, the patient experiencing a feeling of suffocation, mainly during the night, and last but not least, the patient was disturbed by the tumor's aesthetic appearance.

The particularity of the case is represented by the surprisingly good evolution and the very short time of spontaneous

epithelization, given the patient's age, associated illnesses and vices, which forecasted satisfactory results at best.

## Conclusions

- In rhinophyma the surgical indication is mostly of aesthetic order, in our case it was mainly functional, because of the respiratory disorders induced by this pseudotumoral form.
- Getting a spontaneous epithelialization healing, in a short time assures a good quality life, improving the respiratory and physionomical functions of the patient.

## References

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