

Leukonychia Totalis

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SUMMARY

Leukonychia totalis is a rare clinical disorder where all the finger and toe nails appear strikingly white. We report one case in a young male with no apparent cause. To our knowledge this is the first case reported in the Sultanate of Oman.

Case Report

History:

A 21-year-old male patient of normal built, complained of white discoloration of all finger and toe nails of four years duration. The patient was first seen in late 1990.

The condition, which is asymptomatic, started four years back by involving the left middle and ring fingers. In two to three months time, all the finger and toe nails turned white. There was no past history of a similar illness, and none of his family members or relatives are similarly affected. Further, there was no history of any chronic infection or systemic disturbances.

Examination:

Examination of all fingers and toe nails revealed a uniformly affected strikingly white nails (Fig. 1). Otherwise, these nails showed no abnormalities. Clinical examination of all body organs revealed normal findings.

Investigations:

Routine blood count, blood chemistry including liver and renal profiles, fasting blood sugar, urine, and stool, all showed normal findings

Treatment and follow up:

Besides reassurance, the patient was given a placebo. He has been regularly followed up and was seen last in December 1993. All his nails remained white in colour and he was in a good health.

Discussion

Leukonychia totalis might be due to a) an autosomal dominant disorder, b) secondary to severe systemic illness.¹ No obvious cause could be found in the case reported here. Incomplete keratinisation or presence of air spaces in the nail plate is believed to be the cause of white discoloration,² but there is no concrete evidence for that. To our knowledge this is the first case reported in the Sultanate of Oman.

Acknowledgment

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Fig.1: Strikingly white discoloration of all finger and toe nails.

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