period of time. Future studies will examine the efficacy of the ABC intervention on reducing the number of sunburns experienced by patients.

Kimberly A. Mallett, PhD
Sarah Ackerman, MS
Rob Turrisi, PhD
June K. Robinson, MD

**Author Affiliations:** Prevention Research Center, Department of Biobehavioral Health, Pennsylvania State University, University Park (Mallett, Ackerman, Turrisi); Department of Dermatology, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois (Robinson); editor, *JAMA Dermatology* (Robinson).

**Corresponding Author:** Kimberly A. Mallett, PhD, Prevention Research Center, Department of Biobehavioral Health, Pennsylvania State University, 320 Biobehavioral Health Building, University Park, PA 16802 (kmallett@psu.edu).

**Published Online:** October 29, 2014. doi:10.1001/jamadermatol.2014.3092.

**Accepted for Publication:** August 14, 2014.

**Author Contributions:** Drs Mallett and Turrisi had full access to all of the data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.

**Study concept and design:** Mallett, Turrisi.

**Acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data:** All authors.

**Drafting of the manuscript:** Mallett, Ackerman.

**Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content:** Mallett, Turrisi, Robinson.

**Statistical analysis:** Mallett, Ackerman.

**Obtained funding:** Mallett.

**Administrative, technical, or material support:** Ackerman.

**Study supervision:** Mallett.

**Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** None reported.

**Funding/Support:** This study was supported in part by National Cancer Institute grant R03 CA144435 to Dr Mallett.

**Role of the Sponsor:** The National Cancer Institute had no role in the design and conduct of the study; collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of the data; preparation, review, or approval of the manuscript; and decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

**Disclaimer:** Dr Robinson was not involved in the editorial review of or decision to publish this Research Letter.


**OBSERVATION**

**Cydnidae (Burrowing Bug) Pigmentation: A Novel Arthropod Dermatosis**

Insects can cause a variety of dermatologic problems usually presenting with inflammatory skin lesions. Cydnidae insects (family, Cydnidae; order, Hemiptera; suborder, Heteroptera; superfamily, Pentatomoidea), also known as burrowing (or burrower) bugs, are uncommon in urban areas and usually considered harmless to humans, though there have been anecdotal reports of the development of inflammatory plaques with stink bugs (also in the Pentatomoidea superfamily).

**Report of Cases**

**Case 1.** In the monsoon season, a preschool child presented with asymptomatic brown macules that had appeared suddenly on the soles of both feet (Figure 1). The spots were noted after the child visited a Hindu temple where, as required by custom, he walked barefoot. His mother, who accompanied him to the temple, had similar macules on her feet. Numerous small insects were found on the floor of the temple, and the priest who lived in the temple premises had similar lesions.

**Case 2.** An elementary school student developed asymptomatic small brown macules on the neck and chest after visiting a neighborhood grocery shop in the rainy season. Most of the macules were round or oval, and some also showed a streaky pattern. Many shop workers had similar spots on their skin. There were numerous winged, low-flying insects in the shop and the adjoining greener.

![Figure 1. Burrowing Bug (Cydnidae) Pigmentation in a Child](image-url)

Brown macules of varying shapes and sizes on the soles.
soap and water. However, it could be rubbed off (with some form dark brown. It was difficult to wash off the pigment with the forearm. As lesions grew older, they turned a more unit. Similar lesions were reproduced by rubbing an insect on brown pigmented macules were observed at the site of con-tact. Experimental Case. About 50 to 60 live insects were collected from the grocery store and temples associated with the cases reported herein. One of us (A.K.M.) pressed an insect firmly between the thumb and index finger of the right hand for 60 seconds. About 1 or 2 minutes after releasing the bug, red-brown pigmented macules were observed at the site of con-tact. Similar lesions were reproduced by rubbing an insect on the forearm. As lesions grew older, they turned a more uniform dark brown. It was difficult to wash off the pigment with soap and water. However, it could be rubbed off (with some effort) using acetone. Left alone, the pigment gradually and completely faded over 5 to 6 days.

Insects preserved in 70% alcohol were identified by the one of us (J.A.L.) as Chilocoris assmuthi Breddin, 1904, represent-ing the family Cydnidae (Figure 2).

Discussion | The causal association between the clinical lesion and the insect was established by self-induction of lesions on the thumb and forearm. These induced lesions had an appearance and evolution identical to that seen in patients present-ing with the condition, providing strong evidence for Cydni-da being the cause.

Cydnidae generally live in soil or sand and feed on roots or other underground parts of plants.1 They produce an odor-ous substance from special glands for self-defense, as do other true insects. These glands are found in the thorax in adult Pen-tatomoidea insects and in the lateral part of the abdomen in nymphs.1,2

The secretion, which is expressed actively or can be squeezed out by pressure on the insect, is a poorly studied mixture of hydrocarbonates and other derivatives that function as a repellent and can cause paralysis in prey, act as a danger signal, help in attracting mates, and have antimicrobial activity.3-5

Pentatomoidea are usually considered harmless, but we found 2 reports of erythematous plaques due to Antiteu-chus mixtus and Edessa maculata.6 To our knowledge, pigmentation as seen in our cases has not been previously described.

The sudden development of small pigmented macules can be mystifying. In some cases, spots are mistaken for the petechiae of dengue, which also occurs during the rainy sea-son. Older lesions may resemble lentigines. Clues to the diagnosis include the suddenness with which the spots appear, their occurrence in rainy weather, and the shape of some macules, which appear streaky or show tapering edges.

Amit K. Malhotra, MD
Jerzy A. Lis, PhD
M. Ramam, MD

Author Affiliations: Department of Dermatology and Venereology, S. M. S. Medical College and Associated Hospitals, Jaipur, India (Malhotra); Department of Biosystematics, Opole University, Opole, Poland (Lis); Department of Dermatology and Venereology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India (Ramam).

Corresponding Author: M. Ramam, MD, Department of Dermatology and Venereology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi 110029, India (mramam@hotmail.com).


Conflict of Interest Disclosures: None reported.

Additional Contributions: We are indebted to N. P. Singh, PhD, of the Department of Zoology, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, for help in preliminary identification of the insect.


