

No Dermatological Manifestation in Reported Cases of Human H5N1 Infection

Dear Editor

Dermatological manifestations can be seen in many infectious diseases which can serve as diagnostic clues for such disorders. In dermatology, studying the dermatological manifestations of new emerging infectious diseases can be useful in clinical practice. For example, studying the dermatological manifestations of human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV) in its early emerging period yielded several useful clinical data that is still helpful in cases infected with HIV. Bird flu (H5N1 influenza virus infection) is a new emerging infectious disease. It has recently been documented in medical literature for only a few years. Our knowledge on the dermatological manifestations of the bird flu is limited. It is an interesting topic to assess and summarize data regarding the dermatological manifestations of the bird flu. The author hereby performed a retrospective study to answer this research question.

This brief study was a retrospective research which was done through review of the available literature. In this study, the author reviewed reports concerning human bird flu infection from Thailand available in Index Medicus and Science Citation Index. The author also reviewed published papers in all 256 local Thai journals which are not indexed in international databases. The reports that contained incomplete data were excluded for further analysis. The focus of attention in each paper was the reported dermatological manifestations due to the bird flu infection. Summarization of all determined findings was performed using the basic descriptive statistical analysis. According to this retrospective study, there were 6 included reports on 12 indexed cases^{1,5}. Based to the literature, there was no dermatological manifestation in the reported cases of human H5N1 infection. The prevalence rate of dermatological manifestations in the bird flu infected cases in this study was equal to 0 %.

Naturally, H5N1 virus is a kind of influenza virus. In dermatology, human influenza virus may have some dermatological manifestations⁶. However, the author found no report or evidence regarding the

dermatological manifestations of bird flu in reviewed cases. This might imply that dermatological manifestations are not of clinical importance in bird flu based on case series from Thailand. Finally, the author proposes that there might be no dermatological manifestation in human H5N1 infection. (*Iran J Dermatol* 2009;12: 73)

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