

In Vivo Visualization of Subclinical Blisters of Pemphigoid Gestationis

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Clinical Image

A 38-year-old woman with recurrent pemphigoid gestationis at 10 weeks of her fourth pregnancy was treated with oral low-dose corticosteroids. Pemphigoid gestationis is a rare autoimmune disease that affects the skin during pregnancy. Under therapy the patient presented a minimal itchy erythematous rash on her upper legs (Panel A). Although, there was no evidence of blisters during clinical assessment, the presence of subclinical blisters (SB) could be detected with the use of optical coherence tomography [1] in the horizontal scan (Panel B). Optical coherence tomography is an in vivo, high-resolution, fast imaging technique that is comparable to sonography. The detachment localized between epidermis (E) and dermis (D) is imaged in the vertical scan (Panel C). The indirect immunofluorescence test detected an anti-bullous pemphigoid 180 antibody level of 102 units per milliliter (normal level < 20 units per milliliter). The visualization of subclinical blisters [2,3] could enable the opportunity of early treatment (Figure 1).

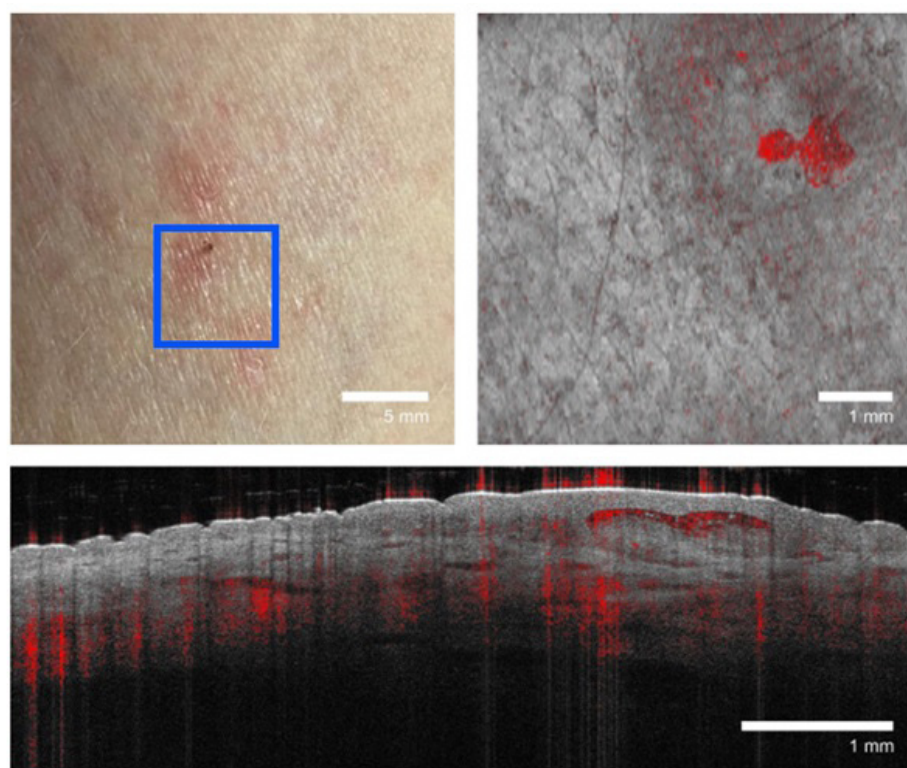


Figure 1: Optical coherence tomography

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