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DERMATOLOGY IMAGES

Keloid formation following daith piercing for migraine treatment

Formação de queloide após piercing daith para tratamento de enxaqueca

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Daith piercing is an auricular cartilage piercing placed through the crus of the helix[1-3]. The term "daith" is derived from the Hebrew word "da'at," meaning "knowledge," and daith piercings originated in alternative lifestyle communities in the 1990s[1,3]. Daith piercings have gained popularity as treatment for migraine and other headache disorders, largely driven by anecdotal reports and social media[4]. Proposed mechanisms include vagal nerve stimulation and auricular acupuncture theories, but evidence-based data are lacking, and it is not recommended by headache societies[1-4].

A 43-year-old woman with a > 20-year history of chronic migraine and episodic vertigo presented with pain at the daith piercing site. The piercing was performed several months earlier, and she reported that it was beneficial for her headaches (Fig. 1). However, she reported that her "body rejected the piercing and [she] had to remove it." After removal, she reported pain with pressure at the piercing site. Physical examination demonstrated a firm flesh-colored/pink nodule involving the crus of the helix (Fig. 2). She was treated with an intralesional corticosteroid injection, resulting in symptomatic improvement.

Auricular cartilage versus lobular piercings carry a higher risk of complications due to limited vascularity and prolonged inflammatory response, including infection, delayed healing, and keloid formation[5]. While keloids classically occur in predisposed individuals, cartilage

Figure 1. Patient's ear with daith piercing.

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Figure 2. Patient's ear with a keloid at the daith piercing site.

piercings may induce keloid formation even in patients without known risk factors[5]. This case underscores a potentially avoidable complication of a popular but unproven intervention. It highlights the importance of counseling patients regarding the limited evidence-based data and scarring risks involved with daith piercings.

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Conflicts of interest

None.

Ethical considerations

Protection of humans and animals. The authors declare that no experiments involving humans or animals were conducted for this research.

Confidentiality, informed consent, and ethical approval. The authors have followed their institution's confidentiality protocols, obtained informed consent from patients, and received approval from the Ethics Committee. The SAGER guidelines were followed according to the nature of the study.

Declaration on the use of artificial intelligence. The authors declare that no generative artificial intelligence was used in the writing of this manuscript.

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