

Sertraline

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First report of a bullous skin eruption with necrosis: case report

A 48-year-old woman developed a bullous skin eruption with full thickness skin necrosis during treatment with sertraline for reactive depression.

Six months after starting treatment with sertraline [Lustral] 100 mg/day, the woman presented with a 10-day history of painful erythema on her posterior and inner thighs, left shoulder and the left side of her neck that had worsened and blistered despite treatment with valaciclovir and amoxicillin/clavulanic acid; her concomitant medications included phenobarbital and HRT. She developed ulceration on her shoulder and thighs and, 3 days later, full-thickness skin necrosis was evident. Skin biopsy showed deep necrosis of the dermis and epidermis and a sparse perivascular and diffuse polymorphonuclear infiltrate containing eosinophils. Fibrinoid necrosis of small dermal blood vessels, basal keratinocyte necrosis and cytoid body formation were seen.

Sertraline and HRT were discontinued 15 days after the onset of symptoms, and HRT was restarted 9 months later with no adverse effect. Subsequent patch testing to sertraline was negative; the woman declined rechallenge. She received extensive split skin grafting but, 2 years later, affected areas remained painful and inflamed, with erythema, telangiectases and a shiny smooth surface resembling scleroderma. The sclerodermatous change had spread beyond the area of initial blistering, and skin tethering had occurred. A biopsy from her thigh showed hyperkeratosis, focal parakeratosis, and hyaline necrosis of the dermis and subcutis with a mild infiltrate of acute and chronic inflammatory cells; drug-induced localised scleroderma was diagnosed.

Author comment: *"The response to discontinuation of sertraline and HRT together with subsequent failure to relapse on reintroduction of the latter supports our view that this was due to sertraline."*

Kirkup ME, et al. Delayed onset of bullous reaction with severe deep skin necrosis in association with sertraline. *British Journal of Dermatology* 150: 164-166, No. 1, Jan 2004 - England 800963927

» **Editorial comment:** A search of AdisBase and Medline did not reveal any previous case reports of bullous skin eruptions associated with sertraline. The WHO Adverse Drug Reactions database contained 66 reports of bullous eruptions associated with sertraline.