**PyodermaGangrenosum**

**What is pyodermagangrenosum?**

Pyodermagangrenosum is a rare treatable cause of skin ulcers. It is not related to gangrene. Pyodermagangrenosum is not ‘catching’ and cannot be transferred from or to another person by touching or in any other way.

**What causes pyodermagangrenosum?**

For about half of the people with pyodermagangrenosum there are no known reasons for it. It may start after minor skin damage or injury. Sometimes other conditions may be associated with pyodermagangrenosum, such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), arthritis or certain blood disorders. It is important to know that having pyodermagangrenosum does not mean that you have these diseases.

**What does pyodermagangrenosum look like?**

Pyodermagangrenosum usually occurs in young and middle-aged adults but the way it looks can vary from person to person. It may start as a small pimple, red bump or blood-blister. The skin then breaks down resulting in an ulcer which often oozes fluid. The ulcer can enlarge rapidly. The edge of the ulcer may look purplish. The most common places where pyodermagangrenosum occurs are the legs, although it can be found anywhere on the body. Sometimes it may occur around the site of a stoma (e.g. colostomy), or in a surgical wound.

**What are the symptoms of pyodermagangrenosum?**

In pyodermagangrenosum, there is usually a single large ulcer but occasionally there may be multiple ulcers. Ulcers may become infected, oozing fluid or pus. Pain or discomfort are common symptoms. Pyodermagangrenosum is not cancer and does not lead to cancer.

**How is pyodermagangrenosum diagnosed?**

There is no specific blood test for pyodermagangrenosum. Certain conditions such as venous ulcers, inflammation of blood vessels, infection, injury, inflammatory disorders and cancer can look like pyodermagangrenosum. This is why your doctor may take a sample of skin (biopsy) to examine under the microscope in a laboratory to confirm the diagnosis. The wound should also be swabbed and cultured for bacteria to rule out associated infection. Your doctor may also request blood tests to check for conditions that may be associated with pyodermagangrenosum.

**It is not hereditary and is not passed from parents to sons or daughters.**

