

MELORHEOSTOSIS: A RARE BONE DISORDER

Manharpreet Singh Sandhu¹

¹Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun

Introduction: Described in 1922 by Leri and Joanny¹, Melorheostosis is a rare benign disorder of bone that gives a classical radiological appearance of dripping or flowing of candle wax. These patients usually present during young adulthood and the findings are usually incidental although it is known to present with pain and swelling of the extremities involved.

Discussion: We report a case of 68 year old gentleman who was noticed a persistent painless mild swelling over the dorsum of his left hand and ring finger after a mild injury of his wrist. Upon examination he had full range of movement of his wrist and fingers of his left hand however the skin over the dorsum appeared slightly thickened and scaly. Plain radiographs of the left hand and forearm show irregular hyperostosis extending along the proximal and middle phalanx of the ring finger, third and fourth metacarpals as well as the ulna bone causing thickening of the bone and narrowing of the medullary cavities. These have been describe to be resembling "dripping candle wax".

Conclusion: The incidence of melorheostosis is not truly known but is estimated to be 0.9 in 1,000,000.² It is distributed equally among males and females. It is best diagnosed by xrays with the classical appearance of irregular hyperostotic changes of the cortex. It is associated with vascular malformations, soft tissue masses adjacent to the affected bone and scleroderma of the overlying skin. Treatment is targeted to improve symptoms, via medical route suchs as bisphosphonates and NSAIDs and surgical route by means of tendon lengthening or excision of hyperostatic bone. Melorheostosis is a benign rare bone disorder that is diagnosed by the radiological appearance, "dripping of candle wax". Treatment is symptomatic.