Clinical picture

Lobster claw syndrome

An 84-year-old woman with a history of cryoglobulinemic vasculitis due to multiple myeloma developed digital gangrene on her right second finger and left big toe (arrows). Her medical history was notable for mental retardation, hearing loss, facial dysmorphism and malformations of fingers and toes. There was no family history with similar features.

Examination revealed an abnormal condition (also known as Lobster Claw Deformity) in which the second, third and fourth digits on the hands and on the feet were missing and only the first and fifth were present (Figure 1).

This clinical presentation prompted a diagnosis of probable EEC syndrome (ectrodactyly, ectodermal dysplasia and cleft palate); this is a rare congenital disorder that usually occurs as an autosomal dominant trait or less commonly in a sporadic form and with variable expression and penetrance.\(^1\)

Of the features of EEC syndrome, our patient also had a coarse face with a broad nasal bridge and low set ears. Finally, the patient was discharged because she and her family refused any diagnostic approach and treatment.

Photographs and text from: N. Mumoli, Department of Internal Medicine, Ospedale Civile Livorno, viale Alfieri 36, 57100 Livorno, Italy.
email: nimumoli@tiscali.it

Reference


Figure 1. (A) Ectrodactyly on the hands (lobster claw hands) with gangrene on right second finger (arrow). (B) Ectrodactyly on the feet (lobster claw feet) with gangrene on left big toe (arrow).