LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Baykal phenomenon: large congenital melanocytic nevi involving the breast tend to spare the nipple and areola

Editor

Recently, a most interesting report on large melanocytic nevi (LCMNs) was published by Can Baykal and co-workers from Istanbul.[1] In eight individuals affected with a LCMN involving the breast, they noted that the nipple and areola were spared, giving rise to the appearance of circular light-colored islands surrounded by the dark-brown or black color of the nevus. The authors claimed that they had discovered a formerly undescribed feature of LCMN. The present study was undertaken to challenge this statement.

For this purpose, the articles as found in PubMed during the years 2000-2015 under the term 'giant nevus' were screened for cases of breast involvement. Surprisingly, it was rather easy to detect 18 previous reports that documented, inadvertently, a similar sparing of the nipple and areola. In none of these reports, the sparing phenomenon was mentioned with one single word. Figure 1 shows photographs of three typical cases.[2 4] Hence, there can be no doubt that Baykal *et al.*[1] have described a new

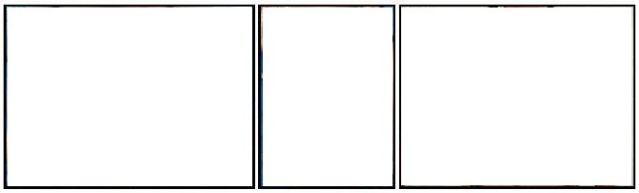

Figure 1 Sparing of nipple and areola as documented inadvertently in three cases of large congenital melanocytic nevi involving the breast. (a) 3-week-old boy.[2] (Reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution License). (b) 6-month-old boy.[3] (Reprinted with permission from Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc., USA). (c) 29-year-old woman.[4] (Reprinted under Creation Commons Attribution License).

Table 1 The Baykal phenomenon as documented inadvertently in case reports during the years 2001–2015

Case number	Authors	Year	Sex	Age	Breast involvement by a large melanocytic nevus	Sparing of nipple-areola complex
1	Mathur *et al.*[5]	2001	M	6 days	Bilateral	Unilateral
2	Wieselthaler *et al.*[6]	2002	M	17 years	Bilateral	Bilateral
3	Gonzalez *et al.*[7]	2003	F	Newborn	Bilateral	Bilateral
4	Whang *et al.*[8]	2005	F	2 months	Bilateral	Bilateral
5	Chan and Giam[9]	2006	M	15 years	Bilateral	Unilateral
6	Kobayashi *et al.*[10]	2006	M	7 years	Bilateral	Bilateral
7	Lam *et al.*[11]	2008	F	Newborn	Bilateral	Bilateral
8	Kadhivaran and Sharma[12]	2009	M	17 years	Unilateral	Yes
9	Kishi *et al.*[13]	2010	M	3 months	Bilateral	Bilateral
10	Raina and Chaudhuri[14]	2010	M	1 month	Bilateral	Bilateral
11	Buján *et al.*[15]	2011	F	8 months	Unilateral	Yes
12	Vera-Remartínez and García-Guerrero[4]	2011	F	29 years	Unilateral	Yes
13	Funayama *et al.*[16]	2012	Unknown	Infancy	Unilateral	Yes
14	Fuyanama *et al.*[16]	2012	M	19 months	Unilateral	Yes
15	Imchen *et al.*[17]	2013	M	7 months	Unilateral	Yes
16	Ouafi and Benzikri[2]	2013	M	3 weeks	Bilateral	Bilateral
17	Arad and Zuker[3]	2014	M	16 years	Unilateral	Yes
18	Machan *et al.*[18]	2015	F	22 years	Unilateral	Yes