

A strange case of ingrown toenail treated with phenol

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Abstract

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INTRODUCTION

The ingrown toenail is a common problem which occurs mostly in the first toe and causes a high amount of morbidity in affected patients. In this report we document a strange case of ingrown toenail of the first toe, which had developed as a huge mass and enveloped the nail. We describe here the cauterization of the nail matrix with phenol after surgical resection of the tumor, a treatment that had good results.

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CASE REPORT

A 56-year-old man came to our office complaining of pain, offensive smelling discharge and disappearance of the nail of the right great toe. Physical examination showed epithelized mass on the nail plate and fistulation from the proximal nail fold to the tip of the toe, epithelization did not occur on the nail plate side of the mass ([Figure 1](#)). The clinical diagnosis of this tumor was epithelized granulation tissue caused by ingrown toenail, however squamous cell carcinoma was not denied completely.



[Figure 1](#)

The first toe of a 56-year-old man. Photograph shows epithelized granulation tissue on the nail plate and fistulation from the proximal nail fold to the tip of the toe

The operative treatment involved anesthetizing the toe with a digital nerve block using 1% lignocaine. The tumor mass was excised at the bilateral terminal base point, and was sent to pathology for an immediate diagnosis. The pathological finding was granulation tissue with partial scar formation, and the external surface of the tumor was covered with epithelial cells.

Next, the nail plate was incised longitudinally from top to the root at a width of approximately 5mm. The posterior nail fold and the nail matrix were cauterized completely with an 88% phenol-immersed cotton-tipped applicator for five minutes. The excessive skin and soft tissue of the tip of the toe were excised and trimmed ([Figure 2](#)).

