

Harlequin fetus – Ichthyosis fetalis: Case report

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Abstract

We are presenting a newborn with a very rare and most severe form of congenital ichthyosis that is characterized by a thick, heavily keratinized and scaly skin.

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Abstract

A newborn born with a very rare and most severe form of congenital ichthyosis that is characterized by a thick, heavily keratinized and scaly skin.

Clinical message

Ichthyosis fetalis is a very rare form of skin disorder that is very difficult to treat, especially in low resource settings.

Case Presentation

Harlequin fetus or Harlequin is a very rare and most severe form of congenital ichthyosis characterized by a thick, heavily keratinized and scaly skin (1,2).

A 3.3kg term male neonate with Apgar scores of 8 and 9 at one and 5minutes respectively was delivered to a 25-year-old Eritrean woman by caesarean section. The baby was covered with thick yellowish to whitish scales, split by extensive some deep and others shallow fissures extending to the dermis. The scale covered almost the entire body. There was severe ectropion. There was scalp hair, the limbs were edematous and inflexible digits due to taut skins (Figure 1A, B and C). The pregnancy was uneventful. Both parents were paternal first-degree cousins. The baby was admitted to neonatal intensive care. In the first day, the baby was suckling well and was well hydrated. On the second day, the scales started to change in color (Figure 1D) and neonatal sepsis ensued. He was intravenous antibiotic, but he progressively deteriorated. The parents demanded, they wanted to take their baby home and they were discharged eventually against medical advice.

References

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2. Liang Q, Xiong F, Liang X, Zheng D, Su S, Wen Y, et al. Two successive cases of fetal harlequin ichthyosis: A case report. Exp Ther Med. 2019 Jan;17(1):449–52.

Figure legend

Figure A, B and C (day zero) and D (day one). A, B, C demonstrated yellowish to whitish scales split by extensive deep and shallow fissures extending to the dermis. Widely open mouth, severe ectropion, edematous limb with inflexible digits due to taut skins was also demonstrated. D demonstrated that decrement of the yellowish scale with more exposure of the fissures and drying of the fissures edge.

