

IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

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Cold Hands Associated with Scleroderma



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A 45-YEAR-OLD WOMAN LIVING IN A RURAL AREA OF NORTHERN SPAIN presented to our clinic with cold hands. These symptoms had developed over a period of 6 years. Raynaud's phenomenon was seen after her hands were exposed to cold. The antinuclear antibody titer was greater than 1:1280, with an anticentromere antibody pattern. This pattern may be present in 40 to 80% of patients with limited scleroderma, and secondary Raynaud's phenomenon may be seen in 80 to 90% of such patients. In 30% of patients with secondary Raynaud's phenomenon, it may be an early presentation of scleroderma. The patient's blood pressure was 135/95 mm Hg at presentation, and she had no other symptoms except skin thickening. We initiated treatment with a calcium-channel blocker. Laboratory testing during follow-up showed mild lymphopenia (1540 lymphocytes per cubic millimeter) and a creatinine level of 0.70 mg per deciliter (60 μ mol per liter); the blood pressure was 120/70 mm Hg. The patient wears gloves to protect her hands in cold weather.

DOI: 10.1056/NEJMicm1304702

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