Letter to the Editor

Reticulate acropigmentation of Kitamura (RAK)

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Reticulate acropigmentation of Kitamura (RAK) and Dowling-Degos Disease (DDD) are characterized by progressive symmetric and asymptomatic reticulated pigmented macules but no hypopigmented macules on the dorsa of hands and feet for the former and flexures for the latter. The histopathology of the hyperpigmentation in both RAK and DDD are similar and is very characteristic (1). Figure 1.

In DDD there are filiform downgrowths of the epidermis and also variably dilated pilosebacoues follicles. Small horny cysts and comedo-like lesions are also present. Hyperpigmentation is quite pronounced at the tips of the rete ridges. DDD resembles the adenoid form of seborrhoic keratosis. In RAK the appearance resembles those seen in a solar lentigo with club-shaped elongations of the rete ridges but with intervening epidermal atrophy, melanin incontinence and perivascular lymphocytic infiltrate.

Kitamura and Akamatsu first described RAK in Japanese patients in 1943 (2). Dowling in 1938 and Degos in 1954 are the first two authors who described DDD (3, 4). Later in 1978, Wilson Jone and Grice are the first authors who characterized DDD (5).

There have been seven previous reports of RAK-DDD overlap in medical literature. Table 1 shows these reports.

It is clear from these reports that RAK or DDD may not be separate diseases, but different phenotypes of a single disorder.

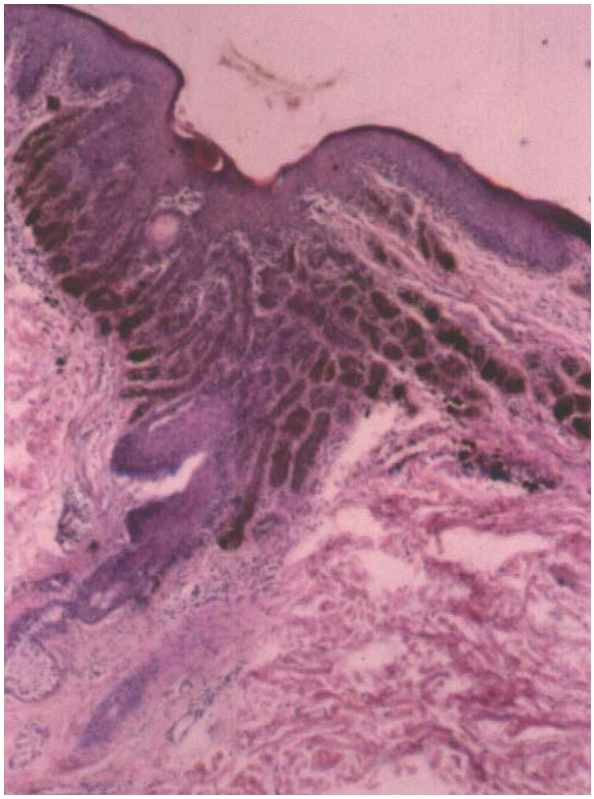

Figure 1. Skin biopsy from a patient with RAK-DDD, showing filiform elongation of rete ridges with clumps of heavy melanin pigment at their tips.

Table 1 – The previous reports of RAK – DDD overlap.

Authors	No. of Cases	Mode of inheritance	Age of onset (years)	Other family members with one of the following: RAK, RAD*, DDD
Al Hawsawi[6] et al	1 female	Sporadic	20	-
Berth-Jones J and Graham Brown RA[7]	2 females, 1 male	AD	7-14	Absent
Cox NH and Long E[8]	1 male	Sporadic	36	-
Crovato et al[9]	1 female	AD	Early thirties	Present (2 cases)
Dhar S et al[10]	1 male	AD	Not available	Present (2 cases)
Lestringant GG et al[11]	3 females, 1 male	AD	22-35	Present (The number unknown)
Ostlere L and Holden CA[12]	2 females, 1 male	AD	*10 (one patient) *not mentioned for others	Absent
Thami GP et al[13]	1 female	AD	15	Present (12 cases)

* RAD is Reticulate Acropigmentation of Dohi, another dyschromatic disorder.

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