

Case Report: Hair Tourniquet Syndrome in Penis

Dimelsa Porras Serna^{1*} and Alessandra Chambilla Rolando²

¹Médico cirujana pediatra – Hospital Sergio E. Bernales, Peru.

²Residente de cirugía pediátrica – Hospital Sergio E. Bernales, Peru.

*Correspondence:

Dimelsa Porras Serna, Médico cirujana pediatra – Hospital Sergio E. Bernales, Peru.

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ABSTRACT

Hair tourniquet syndrome is a rare condition caused by constrictive injuries to bodily appendages or textile threads. It is common in children, affecting fingers or toes, and very rarely affects genitals. We present the case of a 10-month-old infant with hair tourniquet syndrome in penis.

Conclusion: Timely diagnosis and management prevent necrosis of the affected area due to strangulation.

Keywords

Hair tourniquet, Penis.

Introduction

Hair tourniquet syndrome is a rare condition [1], a constrictive lesion of body appendages caused by hair or textile threads [1-6], common in children [3], primarily affecting fingers and toes, and less frequently the genitals, [1,5] and is common in the penis in children aged 0-6 years [4]. Clinically, inflammation, edema, and redness are observed³, and in severe cases, ischemia can occur, potentially leading to necrosis if not removed promptly [3,4,6,]. Poor hygiene is a risk factor [3]. The following is a case report of a 10-month-old infant with a hair tourniquet on his penis.

Case Report

A 10-month-old boy presented to the emergency department with cough, irritability, and loud crying. He was evaluated by a pediatrician and diagnosed with an upper viral respiratory infection. The mother reported pain when urinating and changes in the color of the penis the day before admission. A pediatric surgery consultation was requested. Physical examination revealed a purplish mass with a hair constricting the foreskin (Figure 1). The hair tourniquet was removed under local anesthesia using curved hemostatic forceps (Figure 2). Warm compresses were applied. Forty minutes after the procedure, improvement was observed, and the patient was discharged (Figure 3).

Discussion

Thread tourniquet syndrome is a condition that occurs when a fiber, such as a hair, wraps around an appendage, obstructing circulation [1-6].

The exact etiology of hair tourniquets is unclear. It is believed that hair becomes more elastic when wet and, upon drying, shortens and contracts, producing a tourniquet effect [4]. Another cause is telogen effluvium, where hair loss increases after childbirth due to reduced hair production, lasting for 2-6 months postpartum [3,5]. In this case, the patient is a 10-month-old infant. The incidence is 0.02-0.03% of children, predominantly those under 6 years of age [5]. Hair tourniquets affect lymphatic and venous drainage, and subsequently arterial drainage, with a risk of ischemia and necrosis [6]. A risk factor is circumcision, as it exposes the coronal sulcus, facilitating strangulation⁴. In this case, the patient was uncircumcised, and the tourniquet was evident in the foreskin. Treatment involves hair removal as soon as possible to prevent necrosis [1-6].

Conclusion

Early diagnosis is essential to prevent progressive strangulation that compromises blood flow, leading to tissue ischemia or even self-mutilation of the affected area.

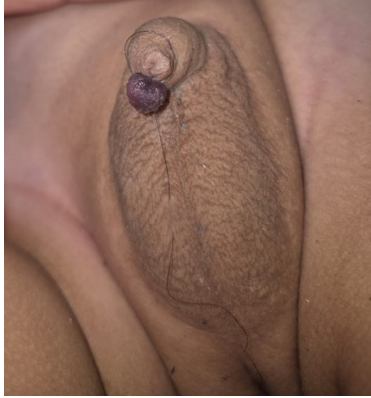


Figure 1: Hair tourniquet síndrome.



Figure 2: Extraction the hair tourniquet.



Figura 3: Post extraction of hair tourniquet.

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