Nail changes associated with hand, foot, and mouth disease

Ya-Li Gao resident dermatologist, Ze-Hu Liu consultant dermatologist

Department of Dermatology, Affiliated Third Hospital of Hangzhou, Anhui Medical University, Hangzhou, China

A 3 year old boy presented with one month of nail shedding affecting two right hand fingernails and three left hand fingernails (fig 1).

He had no previous nail trauma or fungal infection, but two months earlier he had hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD). HFMD is typically caused by Coxsackievirus A16 and Enterovirus 71. Onychomadesis, the spontaneous separation of the nails from the matrix, can occur 1-2 months after HFMD. Inflammation secondary to virus replication is thought to cause temporary nail matrix arrest. Normal regrowth occurs spontaneously. Onychomadesis ranges from mild transverse nail plate ridges (Beau’s lines) to complete nail shedding and can also occur with chemotherapy, Stevens-Johnson, Kawasaki disease, and measles.

Parental consent obtained.


Published by the BMJ Publishing Group Limited. For permission to use (where not already granted under a licence) please go to http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

Correspondence to Z-H Liu zehuliu@yahoo.com