SUMMARY

Skin diseases of the male genitalia represent a diverse spectrum of maladies. Most cases fall into the differential diagnosis: fixed drug eruption, allergic/irritant contact dermatitis, infection, neoplasia/tumor, papulosquamous/systemic, and balanitides. A thorough history and physical examination defining the primary lesion, secondary changes, and distribution will establish most cutaneous diagnoses.

KEY WORDS: Male genitalia; Skin disease; Intertrigo; Fixed drug eruption; Contact dermatitis; Infection; Neoplasia; Trauma; Papulosquamous dermatitis; Balanitis.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
INFLAMMATORY DISEASES
INFECTIONS
COMMON BENIGN GROWTHS
MALIGNANT GROWTHS
REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

Skin disease of the male genitalia can occur as a primary process for certain dermatoses with a predilection for the area, as an extension of generalized skin disease, or as an expression of systemic disease. A differential diagnosis can be broad but most diseases fall into one of the following categories: fixed drug eruption, allergic/irritant
INFLAMMATORY DISEASES

Contact/Irritant Dermatitis

Contact dermatitis of the genitals can be allergic or irritant in nature. Common causes of allergic contact dermatitis include condoms, diaphragms, spermicides, lubricants, feminine hygiene products, and topical medicaments. Sensitivity to industrial or other contactants, for example, plant allergens, may produce contact sensitization on the groin through “hand transfer” (1). Affected patients usually have sharply demarcated, red, edematous plaques on the glans and shaft, occasionally on the thighs and scrotum as well, and penile edema may be marked. Most patients experience some discomfort, usually pruritus and burning (See Fig. 1 and Color Plate 12, following p. 132).

Contact dermatitis associated with condoms and rubber diaphragms produces well demarcated, red plaques on the glans and shaft from exposure to tetramethylthiuram, mercaptobenzothiazole, and dithiocarbamate, the most common allergens in those products (2,3). Patients allergic to tetramethylthiuram and mercaptobenzothiazole should use Trojan brand condoms or nonrubber condoms made from sheep intestine despite their questionable ability to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (4,5).