

# Hand foot syndrome associated with standard dose cytarabine

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## ABSTRACT

Hand-foot syndrome, is a side effect of cytotoxic chemotherapy, causes erythema, dyesthesias, swelling of palms and soles and sometimes blisters. Rarely, it may ulcerate. The most commonly used drug that frequently causes this reaction is 5-fluorouracil or its prodrug oral capecitabine. High dose cytarabine is known to cause HFS. Here we report a case of HFS caused by standard dose cytarabine.

**Key words:** Cytarabine, hand-foot syndrome, palmar-plantar erythrodysesthesia

A 28-year-old lady with an acute myeloid leukemia underwent induction chemotherapy consisting of daily intravenous infusion of cytarabine (100 mg/m<sup>2</sup>) for 7-days plus daunorubicin (75 mg/m<sup>2</sup>) for 3 days. On day 8 of therapy the patient's left palm and soles became

red and painful. Later, well-demarcated erythematous plaques, bullae, and desquamation developed over her hands and feet [Figure 1a and b]. Diagnosed as cytarabine-induced palmar-plantar erythrodysesthesia (hand foot syndrome, HFS, acral erythema, or Burgdorf's reaction). She was given supportive care, topical emollient, cushioning sore skin with soft pads and pyridoxine (vitamin B6), and the acral erythema completely resolved by day 18.



**Figure 1a:** Erythematous plaques, bullae, and desquamation of hand



**Figure 1b:** Discoloration of feet

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DOI:  
10.4103/0971-5851.125263

**How to cite this article:** Sharma A, Baghmar S. Hand foot syndrome associated with standard dose cytarabine. Indian J Med Paediatr Oncol 2013;34:333. **Source of Support:** Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.