

TROMBIDIOSIS

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SUMMARY

Trombidiosis is a self-limited, but very annoying disease. After the Second World War the amount of new literature dealing with it, has been decreasing, owing to rising interest in many new diseases.

As trombidiosis may sometimes be important in differential diagnosis in respect to more severe diseases, some less known facts about the vital cycle of chiggers are discussed. The clinical findings and the course of trombidiosis are mentioned. It is not an unusual condition in certain places in the Ljubljana area, specially in early summer.

KEYWORDS

larva, trombicula autumnalis, itching dermatitis, review

INTRODUCTION

Trombidiosis is a self-limiting disease, appearing mostly during late spring and early summer, but also in autumn. Itching and red macular and papular lesions are the prominent symptoms.

Synonyms: trombidiasis, trombiculiasis, trombiculosis, scrub itch, autumnal itch, erythema autumnale.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

The so-called "harvest mites" (chiggers, red bugs, or scrub itch mites) belong to the family Trombiculidae

(order Acarinae) (1). They are similar to ticks, but are much smaller. More than 1200 species of Trombiculidae have been described (2) since 1790 when *Trombicula autumnalis* was discovered (3).

Some species of Trombiculidae cause a very irritating dermatitis. *Trombicula autumnalis* is an important chigger in Europe, *T. desaleri*, *T. japonica*, *T. zachvatkini*, *T. toldti*, *Euschoengastia serothermobia* are also known to be parasitic for humans (4).

Others are important vectors of rickettsial diseases (*T. akamushi*, *T. deliensis*, *T. fletcheri*, *T. intermedia*, *T. pallida*, and *T. scutellaris*).

The family is cosmopolitan in distribution, it is

