

The Immune Compromised Host in the Twenty-first Century: Management of Mucocutaneous Infections

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Infectious diseases encountered in dermatology have changed tremendously during the past few decades with the emergence of the immunocompromised host. This change is a result of the human immunodeficiency virus epidemic, use of immunomodulating drugs, bone marrow transplantation, increasing prevalence of diabetes mellitus, and an aging population. New pathogens have been discovered and new disorders have occurred. In the compromised host, infection can be more aggressive and widespread locally, be caused by opportunistic pathogens, and be disseminated hematogenously from or to the skin. The prevalence of nonmelanoma skin cancer has increased, and squamous cell carcinomas can be more aggressive with more rapid local growth as well as frequency of metastasis.

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THE NUMBER OF individuals with an acquired immune compromised status continues to increase as we enter the 21st century. Major factors for this increase include the expanding human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic, chemotherapy of cancers, immunosuppressive therapy of organ (solid and bone marrow) transplant recipients and inflammatory disorders, and increasing numbers of individuals with diabetes mellitus (Table 1). These patients are subject to an exceptionally broad variety of potential microbial pathogens and a wide spectrum of clinical manifestations of disease resulting from the abnormal immune response. Cutaneous and subcutaneous tissues may be expected to be an important aspect of infection, for 3 reasons.^{1,2} The skin and mucosal surfaces represent the body's first line of defense against the external environment. These barriers assume an even greater importance when secondary defenses, such as phagocytosis, cell-mediated immunity, and antibody production, are impaired. The rich blood supply of the skin provides a route of spread of infection both from the skin to other bodily locations and to the skin from infected sites. A skin lesion serves as an early warning system to alert the patient and the

clinician to the existence of a systemic infection. Cutaneous lesions may be benign in appearance, presumably because of the impaired host immune response, and therefore be easily missed or dismissed as insignificant. Third, skin infections are common, occurring in up to one third of significantly compromised hosts.

Globally, the HIV epidemic continues to broaden, especially in Third World countries, with the total number of infected individuals approaching 40 million.³ Untreated HIV-infected individuals in developing countries remain relatively asymptomatic, developing an acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)-defining condition in 5 to 7 years after becoming infected; the estimated survival time once an AIDS-defining condition has occurred is 5 to 9 months. In contrast, in industrialized countries with access to all modalities of therapy, the average time after primary HIV infection to occurrence of an AIDS-defining illness ranges from 10 to 15 years; survival after AIDS diagnosis ranges from 9 to 26 months, and is increasing because of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

With use of HAART during the past few years, there has been a sharp decline in the rate of HIV disease as well as in the number of deaths. The age-adjusted death rate among HIV-infected individuals in 1997 (16,685) was only 40% of that in 1995 (43,115). This improved prognosis requires that individuals have access to treatment, can tolerate triple therapy, and can adhere to the therapeutic regimens. This dramatic decline in morbidity and mortality due to HIV disease in the

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Table 1. Classification of Immunocompromise

HIV disease
Bone marrow and lymphatic cancers
Leukemia (acute and chronic)
Multiple myeloma
Lymphoma
Solid tumors
Diabetes mellitus
Transiently immunosuppressed after surgery
Solid organ transplantation: kidney, heart, lung, pancreas
Bone marrow transplantation
Immunosuppressive chemotherapy of inflammatory disorders
Cytotoxic chemotherapy
Old age

United States has also occurred in other developed nations with access to HAART (Canada, western Europe, and Australia). The death rate in Europe at the beginning of 1998 had decreased to less than 20% of that before 1995. HAART has altered natural history to an extraordinary degree. Nearly all mucocutaneous complications of HIV disease either improve or resolve if improved immune function is achieved by HAART. Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), which had caused great morbidity and some mortality, either does not occur or, if present, often resolves with immune reconstitution.

A new phenomenon, the immune restoration syndrome, is provoked by improved immune function following initiation of HAART. An exaggerated immune response occurs to presume subclinical or residual infection by pathogens such as mycobacteria, cytomegalovirus, and hepatitis virus at the time when CD4+ lymphocytes are increasing rapidly. Patients can also experience adverse cutaneous drug reaction to agents such as trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole, which were previously tolerated.

PATHOGENESIS OF MUCOCUTANEOUS INFECTIONS

Skin as a Barrier to Infection

The skin is quite resistant to infection. The mechanisms by which the resistance occurs are not well understood. Several important components that contribute to microbial resistance are nonspecific: intact keratinized layers of the skin, which prevent penetration of microorganisms; dryness of the skin, which retards the growth of certain organisms such as aerobic gram-negative bacilli and *Candida* species; the suppressant effect of the normal skin flora, which appears to reduce

colonization of pathogens, a phenomenon known as bacterial interference. Within this framework, then, one might expect potentially serious skin infections to develop under the following circumstances: destruction by trauma or bypass by introduction of intravascular catheters of the previously intact keratinized layer of skin; moistening of the skin, such as under occlusive dressings; alteration of the normal colonizing flora, such as after administration of antimicrobial agents. These types of events would represent some risk to the normal patient but are considerably more threatening to the compromised patient with impaired immunologic defenses that are likely to be more readily overwhelmed when the primary cutaneous barrier breaks down.

An example of these phenomena are the development of invasive fungal infection in compromised patients whose skin has been traumatized by tape holding intravascular lines in place. Infection with *Rhizopus* species has been associated with use of Elastoplast tape to secure intravascular catheters.⁴ Skin infection with *Aspergillus* species has occurred at the site of boards to stabilize arms to protect intravenous lines.⁵ Because of the occurrence of these types of infections, the following approach would seem warranted: Occlusive dressings in immunocompromised patients should be avoided when possible and skin covered by such dressings should be routinely inspected. Paper tape should be used in preference to cloth tape, and surgical dressings might be secured with girdles of elasticized netting rather than tape whenever possible.

The effect of chronic administration of corticosteroids (topical or systemic) on the skin is another factor that may contribute to increased susceptibility of compromised patients to infection. Steroid therapy appears to inhibit proliferation of fibroblasts, synthesis of mucopolysaccharides, and deposition of collagen. The net effect is thin and atrophic skin that heals poorly. Minor trauma generates lesions that tend to persist, providing potential portals of entry for pathogens. An example of the phenomenon that has been observed is recurrent staphylococcal cellulitis about the elbow in patients receiving chronic immunosuppressive therapy after renal transplantation. These patients exhibited 2 adverse effects of chronic corticosteroid administration: thinning of the skin leading to enhanced susceptibility of the tissue to trauma and steroid-induced proxi-

mal myopathy. Because of the myopathy, the patients tended to rise from the sitting position by pushing off with their elbows, thus traumatizing them. Cellulitis about the elbows recurs in these patients until their elbows are protected and the steroid dose is decreased.

Types of Skin Infection

Infection of the cutaneous and subcutaneous tissues in compromised patients can be classified in a variety of ways: by pathogen, by underlying immunologic defect, or by pace of illness. An additional categorization considers pathophysiological events and consists of 4 groups (Table 2): (1) infection originating in skin and typical of that which occurs in immunocompetent persons, albeit with the potential for more serious illness; (2) extensive cutaneous involvement with pathogens that normally produce trivial or well-localized disease in immunocompetent patients; (3) infection originating from a cutaneous source and caused by opportunistic pathogens that rarely cause disease in immunocompetent patients but that may cause either localized or widespread disease in compromised persons; (4) cutaneous or subcutaneous infection that represents metastatic spread from a noncutaneous site. Cutaneous and subcutaneous infections in compromised patients are discussed in this section within the framework of these 4 groups.

Primary Skin Infections With Common Pathogens

The incidence and severity of conventional forms of infections originating in the skin are often increased in the compromised host. Gram-positive organisms, such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and group A streptococci, most commonly cause these infections. In the healthy host, these organisms cause superficial infection of the epidermis or hair follicles. In the compromised host, superficial infections can quickly extend deeper, causing soft tissue infections and septicemia. Patients with granulocytopenia are more susceptible to cellulitis caused by less virulent bacterial pathogens, such as Enterobacteriaceae and *Pseudomonas* species and by anaerobic bacteria. Patients with leukemia or diminished cell-mediated immunity may have erysipelas-like infection, caused by organisms such as *Cryptococcus neoformans* or *Candida* species, mimicking cellulitis caused by common gram-positive bacteria. When evaluating cellulitis in a compromised patient, common as well as uncommon/rare pathogens must be considered as potential pathogens. If a patient does not respond to conventional antimicrobial therapy, an aggressive approach to diagnosis is warranted with biopsy of lesions for Gram and other stains, cultures, and dermatopathology, to identify the pathogen correctly.

Table 2. Types of Skin Infection by Pathophysiological Events

Type of Infection	Pathogen	Site of Infection	Healthy Host	Compromised Host
Primary skin infections with common pathogens	<i>S aureus</i> , group A streptococcus	Epidermis, hair follicles, dermis	Impetigo, ecthyma, folliculitis, abscess, intertrigo	Soft tissue infection, necrotizing soft tissue infection, septicemia
Unusually widespread cutaneous infection	Dermatophytes, <i>Candida</i> spp	Epidermis, intertriginous sites, hair follicles	Dermatophytosis: epidermal (limited), folliculitis	Dermatophytosis: epidermal (extensive), folliculitis
	<i>Candida</i> spp	Oropharynx, esophagus, genitalia	Candidiasis: intertrigo, genital	Candidiasis: intertrigo, folliculitis, mucosal
	HSV		Localized herpes; resolves spontaneously	Chronic herpetic ulcers
	VZV		HZ (mild)	Extensive HZ
	EBV			Hairy leukoplakia
Opportunistic primary cutaneous infection	MCV		MCV (localized, nonfacial)	Widespread MC, resistant to therapy
	HPV		Common and mucosal warts	Widespread warts; SCC (in situ and invasive)
	Atypical mycobacteria	Dermis, hypodermis	Swimming pool granuloma	Soft tissue infection ± necrosis; septicemia
Systemic infection metastatic to cutaneous and subcutaneous sites	Nocardia			
	Molds			
Systemic infection metastatic to cutaneous and subcutaneous sites	<i>Prototheca</i>			
	Bacteria	Dermis, hypodermis	Soft tissue infection ± necrosis	Soft tissue infection ± necrosis
	Fungal pneumonitis with fungemia		Nodules	Nodules

Unusually Widespread Cutaneous Infection

Nonvirulent skin fungi and viruses constitute the 2 major causes of infection in this category. These pathogens typically cause minor infections in immunocompetent persons, but in compromised patients tend to cause more extensive disease that may lead to more serious systemic illness. Viruses that cause exanthems (eg, those caused by rubella, measles, or enterovirus) do occur in compromised patients, but the more problematic pathogens include the family of herpesviruses and human papillomaviruses (HPV).

Nonvirulent fungi include the dermatophytes (*Trichophyton* species, *Microsporum* species, and *Epidermophyton*), *Candida* species, *Pityrosporum* species, *Fusarium solani*, and *Alternaria alternata*. These fungi frequently colonize human skin and cause localized, superficial skin infection in immunocompetent persons, particularly when the skin has been traumatized. The incidence and severity of infection may be increased in compromised patients. Topical corticosteroid preparations prescribed mistakenly for epidermal dermatophytoses compromise local immunity, facilitating growth of the fungus and causing extensive local epidermal infection (so-called tinea incognita in that the diagnosis of dermatophytosis is missed); dermatophytic folliculitis (Majocchi's granuloma) is commonly seen as an associated finding. Systemic corticosteroid therapy can also cause widespread epidermal dermatophytosis. These dermatomycoses are best treated with oral agents such as terbinafine, itraconazole, or fluconazole; secondary prophylaxis is often necessary.

Skin infections with members of the herpesvirus family, particularly herpes simplex virus (HSV) and varicella-zoster virus (VZV), are very common in compromised patients. Nasolabial or anogenital infections caused by HSV occur in as many as half of renal transplant recipients, patients with malignancy, those receiving chemotherapy, and HIV-infected individuals. Immunocompromised patients may have more serious forms of HSV infection, including chronic herpetic ulcers, esophageal or respiratory tract infection, or disseminated infection (patients with lymphoma, transplant recipients [bone marrow, renal, cardiac, or liver], and neonates).

In compromised patients, reactivation of VZV is common, occurring in 14% of persons with Hodgkin's disease, 8% of non-Hodgkin's lym-

phoma and renal transplant recipients, and 2% with solid tumors. Visceral dissemination occurs in 15% to 30% of patients with Hodgkin's disease with zoster; systemic dissemination, however, is uncommon in renal transplant recipients. Reactivated VZV infection is particularly problematic for bone marrow transplant recipients, of whom one half will develop herpes zoster (HZ). In one third of these, VZV will disseminate, and in one fourth, a generalized atypical recurrent varicella-like illness will develop.

Reactivated cytomegalovirus (CMV) causes hepatitis, pneumonitis, chorioretinitis, encephalitis, and gastroenteritis in transplant recipients and HIV-infected individuals; cutaneous CMV infections are rare. Cutaneous CMV infections are reported to present as nodules, ulcers, indurated plaques, vesicles, petechiae, or a maculopapular exanthem. Reactivation of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) results in oral hairy leukoplakia (OHL) on the lateral aspects of the tongue, a lesion nearly pathognomonic for HIV disease.

In chronically immunosuppressed patients, HPV-induced lesions, ie, verrucae and condylomata, either may be extremely numerous or may form large confluent lesions. Up to 40% of renal transplant recipients develop warts after transplantation, half have more than 10 warts, and up to 1% have extensive disease. The incidence and severity of warts seem to be related to immunosuppression with previously acquired latent virus reactivating with institution of immunosuppressive therapy. In compromised patients, HPV-induced lesions have the potential for malignant transformation, particularly in sun-exposed areas of the body. Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) arising in sites of chronic sun exposure occurs 36 times more frequently in renal transplant recipients than in the general population, some clearly arising within warts; HPV DNA is demonstrable within the tumors. Management of patients with extensive warts should include avoidance of sun exposure, use of strong sunscreens, reduction in immunosuppressive therapy when possible, and careful observation for the development of malignant lesions. HPV-induced anogenital in situ and invasive SCC are also more common in transplant recipients and HIV-infected individuals; these persons should also be screened for in situ and invasive SCC with a Pap test of the anus and cervix and lesional biopsy when indicated.

Opportunistic Primary Cutaneous Infection

Following inoculation into the skin, organisms of low virulence can cause local or disseminated infections in some persons with impaired immune defenses. Localized disease can be caused by atypical mycobacteria, *Paecilomyces*, and *Prototheca*. Environmental mycobacteria such as *Micobacterium*, *marinum*, *M chelonae*, *M kansasii*, and *M haemophilium* may cause cutaneous infection after inoculation. In the normal host, the infection is localized and may resolve without therapeutic intervention; however, in the compromised host, more extensive local infection may occur as well as lymphatic or hematogenous dissemination. Primary infection caused by *Aspergillus*, *Rhizopus*, or *Candida* species arises at localized cutaneous sites but has the potential for disseminated disease in the compromised host. Primary cutaneous infection with these fungi has been associated with the use of adhesive or Elastoplast tape, cardiac electrode leads, or extravasation of intravenous fluids. *Aspergillus* and *Rhizopus* species can invade blood vessels, resulting in infarction, hemorrhage, and hematogenous dissemination. Localized disease with life-threatening systemic spread may be caused by *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Aspergillus* species, *Candida* species, and *Rhizopus* species. *Prototheca wickerhamii* is an algae-like organism ubiquitous in nature that may cause localized infection after trauma or surgery.

Systemic Infection Metastatic to Cutaneous and Subcutaneous Sites

In a report of dermatologic manifestations of infection in compromised patients, 8 of 31 patients (26%) had apparent spread of systemic infection to cutaneous and subcutaneous tissues.² In 6 of these 8 patients, cutaneous or subcutaneous lesions were the first clinical sign of disseminated infection. In compromised hosts, cutaneous lesions resulting from hematogenous spread of infection are caused in general by 3 classes of pathogens: (1) *P aeruginosa* and other bacteria; (2) the endemic systemic mycoses (*Histoplasma capsulatum*, *Coccidioides immitis*, *Blastomyces dermatitidis*, and *Penicillium marneffeii* (southeast Asia); and (3) the ubiquitous opportunistic organisms *Aspergillus* species, *C neoformans*, *Candida* species, *Rhizopus* species, and *Nocardia* species.

OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS BY PATHOGEN

Bacterial Infections

Staphylococcus Aureus

S aureus causes the majority of all pyodermas and soft tissue infections. *S aureus* is not one of the cutaneous resident flora. It colonizes the anterior nares in up to 25% of healthy individuals at any one time and more than 50% of chronically ill individuals. Intertriginous sites such as the axilla and perineum can also be colonized. The incidence of *S aureus* nasal carriage is higher in chronically ill individuals, especially those with HIV disease, diabetes mellitus, cancer (particularly hematologic malignancies), neutropenia, abnormal leukocyte function, chronic granulomatous disease, hyperimmunoglobulinemia E syndrome, and interleukin-2 therapy.

Ensnared in the nares, *S aureus* is able to colonize and infect superficial skin lesions by entering hair follicles or small breaks in the epidermis, by secondary infection of dermatologic disorders (scabies, eczematous dermatitis, herpetic ulcer, KS, molluscum contagiosum), or via vascular access line and drainage tubes, resulting in pyodermas (folliculitis, furuncles, carbuncles, abscess, impetigo, bullous impetigo, and ecthyma). Once established in the skin, *S aureus* is able to invade more deeply into the soft tissue with resultant erysipelas (horizontal spread in lymphatics) and cellulitis (vertical spread into subcutaneous fat). *S aureus* is the most common cause of wound infections. Risk factors for surgical wound infection depend on the following: host factors (immune status, diabetes mellitus); surgical factors (disruption of tissue perfusion that accompanies the surgical procedure, foreign body use); staphylococcal factors (substances that mediate tissue adherence and invasion or that enable staphylococci to survive host defenses and antibiotics in tissues; and antimicrobial prophylaxis). Bacteremia can result in deposition of *S aureus* in the skin, resulting in petechiae, hemorrhages, subcutaneous nodules, soft tissue infections, and pyomyositis.

Various strains of *S aureus* are capable of producing a variety of toxins, which cause the clinical syndromes of staphylococcal scalded skin syndrome (rare in infants older than 2 years of age), staphylococcal scarlet fever, and toxic shock syndrome (TSS). TSS is a febrile, multi-organ disease caused by the elaboration of staphylococ-

cal toxins, characterized by a generalized scarlatiniform eruption, hypotension, functional abnormalities of 3 or more organ systems, and desquamation in the evolution of the exanthem. Cellulitis caused by *S aureus* that produce TSS toxins can be accompanied by the cutaneous and systemic findings of staphylococcal scarlet fever or TSS.⁶

Streptococcus

Group A β -hemolytic streptococci (*Streptococcus pyogenes*) commonly colonize the upper respiratory tract and secondarily infect (impetiginize) minor skin lesions from which invasive infection can arise.⁷⁻⁹ Certain strains of group A streptococci have a higher affinity for the skin than the respiratory tract and can colonize the skin, subsequently causing superficial pyodermas or soft tissue infections. Lymphatic obstruction/lymphedema predisposes to erysipelas or cellulitis. Individuals at higher risk are those who have had radical mastectomy with axillary node dissection or saphenous vein harvest.

Group B streptococci commonly colonize the perineum and may cause soft tissue infections at this site. Advanced age, cirrhosis, diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, surgical wounds, decubitus ulcer, neurogenic bladder, and foreign bodies (breast or penile implants) have all been associated with a significantly increased risk of acquiring group B streptococcus infection. An unusual form of recurrent cellulitis of the lower extremities in women results from impaired lymphatic drainage caused by neoplasia, radical vulvectomy or pelvic surgery, or radiation therapy. Morbidity and mortality are relatively high for group B streptococcus infections, with a high incidence of bacteremia.

S pneumoniae is a rare cause of cellulitis, occurring in individuals predisposed by connective tissue disease, alcoholism, drug abuse, HIV disease, or corticosteroid therapy.^{10,11} Clinically, infected areas are characterized by bullae, brawny erythema, and a violaceous hue. Approximately 50% of cases are the result of pneumococcal bacteremia, often from a pulmonary source. Because of underlying medical conditions, and often pneumonia, the morbidity is high.

Other Gram-Positive Bacteria

Primary cutaneous *Bacillus cereus* infection presents as a single bulla with necrosis on the extremity of an immunocompromised patient.¹²⁻¹⁴

The large gram-positive rods of *B cereus* may be mistaken for *Clostridium* species in lesional biopsy specimens and smears.

Skin and soft tissue infections caused by *Corynebacterium jeikeium* occur in granulocytopenic patients and take either of 2 forms: (1) primary infections (cellulitis at bone marrow biopsy sites, infection at insertion sites of intravascular catheters, skin fissures [perianal]),¹²⁻¹⁴ and (2) secondary infections (erythematous or hemorrhagic papular rash, soft tissue abscess, or necrotic lesions) after bacteremia from primary infection sites.¹⁵

Escherichia Coli and Other Gram-Negative Bacilli

E coli and other gram-negative bacilli rarely cause soft tissue infection or hemorrhagic plaques associated with hematogenous dissemination, in individuals with cirrhosis, neutropenia, or leukocyte dysfunction.¹⁶⁻²² In a report of 7 patients with gram-negative bacillary cellulitis and cirrhosis, soft tissue infections were characterized by bullous lesions, ulcers, abscesses, or extensive cutaneous necrosis. Bacteremia occurred in 6 patients who eventually died. Isolates from the skin included *Klebsiellae pneumoniae*, *E coli*, *P aeruginosa*, *Proteus mirabilis*, and *Aeromonas hydrophila*.

Pseudomonas

P aeruginosa causes the necrotizing soft tissue infection ecthyma gangrenosum (EG), which occurs as a primary skin infection²³⁻²⁵ or as a complication of pseudomonal bacteremia.²⁶ EG occurs commonly as a nosocomial infection, especially in immunocompromised patients with diabetes, neutropenia, or poor neutrophil function. *P aeruginosa* is the most common pathogen causing gangrenous cellulitis in childhood. *P aeruginosa* gains entry into the dermis and subcutaneous tissues via adnexal epidermal structures or areas of loss of epidermal integrity (pressure ulcers, thermal burns, and trauma). EG occurs most frequently in the axillae or anogenital regions but can arise at any cutaneous site. Clinically, EG presents initially as an erythematous, painful plaque that quickly undergoes necrosis. Established lesions show bulla formation, hemorrhage, necrosis, and surrounding erythema. If effective antibiotic therapy is not initiated promptly, the necrosis may often extend rapidly. Bacteremia occurs soon after the onset of EG, and

may result in metastatic spread of *P aeruginosa* with subcutaneous nodules and abscesses. Histologically, EG is characterized by a distinctive septic vasculitis. Hematogenous dissemination of *P aeruginosa* to the skin can result in multiple subcutaneous nodules, hemorrhagic bullae, multiple small hemorrhagic papules, and/or EG.²⁷

Stenotrophomonas (formerly classified as *Xanthomonas* [formerly classified as *Pseudomonas*]) *maltophilia* is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in hospitalized patients with neutropenia or cancer, and those undergoing chemotherapy. Primary cellulitis (often necrotizing), disseminated cutaneous nodules, and mucocutaneous ulcers caused by *Xanthomonas* are often associated with underlying malignancies.²⁸

Aeromonas Species

A hydrophila, a gram-negative facultative rod found naturally in aqueous environments, causes soft tissue infections in healthy individuals and more serious infections in the compromised host.^{29,30} *A hydrophila* soft tissue infections occur after injuries sustained in a contaminated aquatic environment or the "outdoors." *A hydrophila* (a normal inhabitant of the foregut of leeches) cellulitis has also followed the therapeutic use of leeches (in 7%-20% of patients) after reimplantation or flap surgery. In the compromised host, *Aeromonas* causes severe cellulitis and necrotizing soft tissue infections.

Vibrio Species

Vibrio vulnificus is a free-living gram-negative rod, occurring naturally in the marine environment, occasionally contaminating oysters and other shellfish. Marine *Vibrio* species can cause sepsis and soft tissue infections, particularly in patients with cirrhosis and/or diabetes mellitus.³¹ *V damsela* may cause fulminant necrotizing soft tissue infections in immunocompetent patients. Either ingestion of raw seafood or exposure of open wounds to seawater can result in *Vibrio* bacteremia and soft tissue infections. Individuals with cirrhosis, hemochromatosis, and diabetes mellitus and other patients with chronic disease are advised to avoid eating raw seafood.

Marine *Vibrio* soft tissue infections occur by direct inoculation into a superficial wound or by bacteremic spread to the skin (metastatic infection). After ingestion of *V vulnificus* in contaminated seafood, the organism is capable of crossing

the gut mucosa rapidly, invading the bloodstream without causing gastrointestinal symptoms. The clinical picture is one of abrupt onset of chills and fever, often followed by hypotension, usually complicated by development of metastatic cutaneous lesions within 36 hours after onset. The cutaneous lesions begin as erythematous plaques, rapidly evolving to hemorrhagic bullae, and then to necrotic ulcers. The lesions arise commonly on the extremities, occasionally bilaterally. Soft tissue infections can also arise following inoculation of *V vulnificus* or *V alginolyticus* directly into a site of soft tissue injury. Infection by either of these *Vibrio* species can be life-threatening in compromised hosts.

Helicobacter Cinaedi

Helicobacter cinaedi causes a syndrome characterized by fever, bacteremia, and recurrent and/or chronic cellulitis (resembling erythema nodosum) in compromised patients. In a series of 23 febrile patients with *H cinaedi* bacteremia (11 were HIV-infected; the others had underlying alcoholism, diabetes, or malignancy), 9 had cellulitis (some with a distinctive red brown or copper discoloration with minimal warmth). In a series of 7 patients (6 HIV-infected, 1 with a history of alcoholism) with *H cinaedi* soft tissue infections, cellulitis with adjacent arthritis occurred in 2 patients. The organism is carried as bowel flora in 10% of homosexual men (no carriage in other groups). Diagnosis is made by considering it in immunocompromised individuals, demonstrating cellulitis on lesional biopsy (excluding panniculitis), and failure to isolate other pathogens. Bacteremia is intermittent; the organism is difficult to isolate, requiring hydrogen in the culture vial. Ciprofloxacin 500 mg twice daily or clarithromycin 500 mg twice daily is effective, given for 6 to 8 weeks to prevent relapse.

Mycobacteria Infections

Mycobacterium tuberculosis. In developing countries, tuberculosis is the most common opportunistic infection in HIV disease; however, cutaneous tuberculosis is relatively uncommon. As has been true in the past, most cases of symptomatic tuberculosis represent reactivation of latent infection. In non-HIV-infected persons who have tuberculosis in some form, the incidence of extrapulmonary tuberculosis is 15%; in HIV disease, 20% to 40%. In advanced HIV

disease, the incidence of extrapulmonary disease increases to 70%.

The etiologic agents of human tuberculosis include *M tuberculosis*, *M bovis*, and occasionally bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG). Cutaneous tuberculosis is highly variable in its clinical presentation. Cutaneous tuberculosis occurs after *M tuberculosis* exposure to an exogenous source or by autoinoculation or endogenous spread from another site. Modes of endogenous spread to skin include: direct extension from underlying tuberculous infection, ie, lymphadenitis or tuberculosis of bones and joints results in scrofuloderma; lymphatic spread to skin results in lupus vulgaris; hematogenous dissemination results in either acute miliary tuberculosis,³²⁻³⁴ lupus vulgaris, or metastatic tuberculosis abscess. Tuberculosis cutis miliaris disseminata is the lesion of miliary tuberculosis, presenting as 1- to 4-mm red-brown papules/papulovesicles/papulopustules.^{35,36} On acid-fast stain of lesional skin biopsy specimens, numerous acid-fast bacilli are seen, however, giant cells and granulomas are absent. In HIV-infected individuals, prior bacillus Calmette-Guérin immunization can be followed by reactivation of and infection by BCG at the site of immunization, dissemination of BCG, or lymphadenitis.

Environmental mycobacteria. Mycobacteria other than tuberculosis (MOTT) (also known as nontuberculous mycobacteria, environmental mycobacteria, potentially pathogenic environmental mycobacteria, atypical mycobacteria, nonleprous mycobacteria) are widely distributed in soil, dust, and water. They are classified by Runyon groups: Group I (photochromogens), *M marinum*, *M kansasii*; Group II (scotochromogens), *M szulgai*, *M gordonae*, *M malmoense*; Group III (nonphotochromogens), *M avium-intracellulare* complex (MAC); Group IV (rapid growers), *M fortuitum* complex (*M fortuitum*, *M chelonae*, *M abscessus* [MFC]). In the immunocompetent host, injury (trauma or surgery) is followed by the development of localized cellulitis or abscess formation in 4 to 6 weeks. In the compromised host, the usual presentation is of multiple erythematous or violaceous subcutaneous nodules without history of trauma; lesions may progress to abscesses that drain and ulcerate.³⁷

M kansasii,^{38,39} *M marinum*,⁴⁰⁻⁴² *M gordonae*,⁴³ *M malmoense*,⁴⁴ *M fortuitum*,^{45,46} and *M chelo-*

nae^{47,48} can cause infection in the healthy as well as the compromised host. Inoculation has occurred via puncture wounds (injection or traumatic) or surgical procedures (augmentation mammoplasty, median sternotomy,^{47,48} percutaneous catheterization); rarely, primary cellulitis occurs without recognizable skin trauma. Contaminated gentian violet used for skin marking has been the source in some outbreaks. MFC soft tissue infections characteristically occur several weeks after the injury and appear as indolent wound infections (nodules, ulcers, granulomatous papules, or verrucous plaques). In immunocompromised individuals, MFC can disseminate hematogenously to skin (multiple recurring abscesses on the extremities) and joints.⁴⁹

In advanced HIV disease, MAC commonly causes systemic infection; however, it rarely causes cutaneous infection.⁵⁰⁻⁵² Cutaneous MAC infections are usually complications of disseminated disease; lesions vary from papules, nodules, pustules, and soft tissue abscesses to ulcerations; localized infection without apparent disseminated infection has been reported.⁵¹ Cutaneous ulcerations have occurred at the sites of underlying MAC-associated lymphadenitis. Subcutaneous abscesses and ulcers caused by localized MAC infection have also been described.

Interpretation of isolation of MAC and/or demonstration of acid-fast bacilli in skin biopsy specimens from patients with advanced HIV disease is difficult in that approximately 40% of these individuals have MAC bacteremia (if not on prophylaxis for MAC). In most cases, in patients in whom MAC is demonstrated on lesional biopsy specimen, the presence of MAC is incidental, having no part in the pathogenesis of the cutaneous lesion. MAC infection has been reported in 3 patients who presented with either submandibular, axillary, or inguinal lymphadenitis.⁵³ After incision and drainage or spontaneous rupture, scrofuloderma occurred with the formation of deep ulcerative lesions; resolution occurred after a short course of routine antituberculous therapy. Subcutaneous masses can also represent underlying osteomyelitis.

Cutaneous *M haemophilum* infection has been reported to induce erythema, swelling, painful nodules, and abscess formation and disseminated cutaneous lesions with systemic involvement of bones, joints, lymphatics, and lungs.⁵⁴⁻⁵⁸ Recovery of *M haemophilum* requires a high level of

clinical suspicion and special handling of mycobacterial cultures by the microbiology laboratory, including cultivation on enriched chocolate agar or heme-supplemented media and incubation at 30°C for up to 8 weeks. Response to antimycobacterial therapy has been poor, as the disease tends to recur and progress.

Mycobacterium leprae. The interrelationship of *M leprae* and HIV in dually infected persons has not been adequately studied.⁵⁹⁻⁶² Tropical areas such as Africa and India that have a high prevalence of leprosy are expected to bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic during the next decade. It is probable that leprosy will accelerate the course of HIV disease and that HIV infection will result in a higher ratio of cases of lepromatous versus tuberculoid leprosy and resistance to antilepromatous therapy.^{63,64} The natural history of leprosy in HIV disease has been reported in 275 patients from Haiti; 6.5% of the entire cohort was HIV seropositive. No difference in HIV seropositivity was detected in patients with either lepromatous or tuberculoid types of leprosy. Of the HIV-seropositive patients, 22% developed new skin lesions and lepromin anergy during the course of dapsone/rifampin leprosy therapy, as compared to 0.8% of HIV-seronegative patients.

Bacillary Angiomatosis

Bacillary angiomatosis (BA) and bacillary peliosis (BAP) occur most commonly in the setting of HIV-induced immunodeficiency, characterized by angioproliferative lesions resembling pyogenic granulomas or KS.⁶⁵ BAP is caused by infection with fastidious gram-negative bacilli of the genus *Bartonella*, *B henselae*, and *B quintana*. The vascular lesions are referred to as BA; those occurring in the liver or spleen, as peliosis (BAP). In immunocompetent individuals, *B henselae* also causes cat scratch disease. HIV-infected individuals with BAP usually have moderate to advanced disease; rarely, BA occurs in immunocompetent, non-HIV-infected individuals. The varied tissue response to *Bartonella* infection in the immunocompetent individual is analogous to the clinical patterns occurring in leprosy. Individuals with intact cellular immunity develop cat scratch disease or tuberculous leprosy; those with impaired cellular immunity develop BAP or lepromatous leprosy. Currently, the prevalence of BA is very low because of prophylaxis given for infections

such as *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) and improved immune function with HAART.

In a study of 49 individuals with BAP, 53% were infected with *B henselae* and 47% were infected with *B quintana*.⁶⁶ *B henselae* and *B quintana* were equally likely to cause cutaneous BA; only *B henselae* was associated with hepatosplenic peliosis. Patients with *B henselae* infection were epidemiologically linked to cat and flea exposure. Those with *B quintana* infections were linked to low income, homelessness, and exposure to head or body lice. Prior treatment with macrolide (erythromycin, clarithromycin, azithromycin) antibiotics appeared to be protective against infection with either species.

The domestic cat serves as a major persistent reservoir for *B henselae*. Cats experience prolonged, asymptomatic bacteremia and can transmit the infection to humans.⁶⁷ The cat flea is the vector of *B henselae* among cats. The domestic cat, however, appears to be a major vector (by scratch or bite) from cat to humans. Antibiotic treatment of infected cats and control of flea infestation are potential strategies for decreasing exposure to *Bartonella*.

Whether asymptomatic or latent infection occurs in humans is not known. The incubation period is unknown but is probably days to weeks. Patients with localized infection may be free of systemic symptoms. Cutaneous BA may be painful; in contrast, similar-appearing lesions of KS are usually not painful unless ulcerated or secondarily infected. Individuals with more widespread disseminated *Bartonella* infection often experience fever, malaise, and weight loss.

Clinically, the cutaneous lesions of BA are red to violaceous, dome-shaped papules, nodules, or plaques, ranging in size from a few millimeters to 2 to 3 cm in diameter (dermal vascular lesions with thinned or eroded epidermis). Less commonly, domed subcutaneous masses occur without the characteristic red color of more superficial vascular lesions.⁶⁸ Lesions are soft to firm and may be tender to palpation. The number of lesions can range from one to hundreds. Nearly any cutaneous site may be involved but the palms, soles, and oral cavity are usually spared. Following hematogenous or lymphatic dissemination, the spectrum of internal disease caused by *B henselae* and *B quintana* includes soft tissue masses, bone marrow, lymphadenopathy, splenomegaly,

and hepatomegaly; internal involvement can occur with or without cutaneous lesions.

The differential diagnosis of the cutaneous papulonodular lesions includes KS, pyogenic granuloma, epithelioid (histiocytoid) angioma, cherry angioma, sclerosing hemangioma, angio-keratomas, and disseminated deep fungal infections. Subcutaneous BA nodules and tumors must be differentiated from enlarged lymph nodes and subcutaneous masses.

The histopathology of lesional skin biopsy specimens of BA is characterized by 2 patterns of lobular proliferations of capillaries and venules. Pyogenic granuloma-like lesions are characterized by proliferation of small, round blood vessels with plump endothelial cells. The stroma is edematous and loose. The inflammatory infiltrate is composed of lymphocytes, histiocytes, and neutrophils. The overlying epidermis may show collarette formation, thinning, or ulceration. Few if any bacteria are visualized by silver stain. The second type of lesion, arising deeper in the dermis or subcutis, appears more cellular, made up of a myriad of small, round blood vessels lined by plump endothelial cells. The interstitium shows a granular amphophilic material. Abundant clusters of bacilli, corresponding to sites of granular material, are visualized by silver stain. Percutaneous liver biopsy in patients with peliosis hepatis may be contraindicated because of the vascular nature of the lesions and the risk for uncontrolled bleeding. Histology of liver lesions shows blood-filled cysts with clusters of bacilli in the connective tissue rims of the cysts.⁶⁹

The infecting *Bartonella* species can be identified by molecular techniques on tissue samples. Isolation of *Bartonella* is possible from lesional tissue biopsy specimens and/or blood. The diagnosis can also be confirmed by detection of anti-*Bartonella* antibodies. The diagnosis of BAP is usually made by the demonstration of pleomorphic bacilli on a Warthin-Starry or similar silver stain or by electron microscopy.

The course of BA is variable. In some patients, lesions regress spontaneously. BA infection may spread hematogenously or via lymphatics to involve bone marrow, bone, spleen, and liver. Death may occur secondary to laryngeal obstruction, liver failure, or pulmonary infection. As with other opportunistic infections in HIV disease, BAP can recur. During the past decade, the incidence of BA has decreased because of use of

antibiotics for MAC prophylaxis and improved immune function following HAART.

BAP is preventable. *B. henselae* is contracted from cats; avoidance should prevent infection. *B. quintana* occurs among homeless people; infection can be prevented by improved hygiene.⁷⁰ The antibiotics of choice are erythromycin 250 to 500 mg by mouth 4 times daily or doxycycline 100 mg twice daily, continued until the lesions resolve, usually in 3 to 4 weeks. Secondary prophylaxis is indicated in patients with recurrent BAP, especially if immune restoration is not possible.

Nocardiosis

Cutaneous nocardiosis can occur as a primary cutaneous infection (abscesses, ulcers, granulomas, soft tissue infection, mycetoma, sporotrichoid [lymphocutaneous] infection),^{71,72} or secondary cutaneous infection (pustules, abscesses, nodules) complicating hematogenous dissemination from the lungs.⁷³⁻⁷⁶ Nocardiosis in HIV disease is rare; prophylaxis for *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP) with sulfonamides may also provide primary prophylaxis for nocardiosis.⁷⁷ Primary cutaneous nocardiosis in HIV disease has been reported to occur at the site of heroin injection; abscesses appear initially and then evolve into large ulcerations. Primary cutaneous nocardiosis may result in lymphangitic proximal extension (sporotrichoid pattern).^{78,79}

Fungal Infections

Superficial Fungal Infections (Dermatomycoses)

Dermatophytoses. Dermatophytes, ie, *Trichophyton*, *Microsporum*, and *Epidermophyton*, may occur on any keratinized epidermal structure, ie, epidermis (stratum corneum), nails, and hair. This group of fungi infect nonviable tissue in otherwise healthy individuals; however, in the compromised host direct invasion of the dermis may occur. Dermatophytoses are important for 3 reasons: the morbidity and disfigurement caused by the dermatophyte infection itself, which can be quite extensive; the breakdown in the integrity of the skin that can occur, providing a portal of entry for other pathogens, particularly *S aureus*; and clinical manifestations of such infections that mimic other dermatologic conditions.⁸⁰ Dermatophyte infections in the compromised host are more frequent, often widespread, atypical in appearance, or invasive.⁸¹

Epidermal dermatophytosis is often widespread in HIV-infected individuals and in transplant recipients. Local immunity to dermatophytic infection is commonly suppressed in patients who have been misdiagnosed as having an inflammatory dermatosis, such as eczema or psoriasis, and treated with topical corticosteroid preparations, so-called tinea incognito. Clinically, this presents as one or many plaque(s), in some cases with sharply marginated borders, in some cases without scaling, and variable degrees of erythema. Papules or nodules within tinea incognito represent a dermatophytic folliculitis (Majocchi's granuloma). Majocchi's granuloma does occur in the absence of topical corticosteroid use.⁸² Inflammatory plaques, \pm abscess formation, \pm hemorrhage associated with dermal invasion have also been reported to occur in hairy and glabrous sites.⁸³⁻⁸⁵ Epidermal dermatophytosis can also occur in sites of irradiation in which local immunosuppression has occurred.⁸⁶

In immunocompromised individuals, *Trichophyton rubrum* causes proximal subungual onychomycosis (PSO) and infection of the undersurface of the proximal nail plate. PSO occurs most often in HIV-infected individuals and its diagnosis is an indication for HIV testing. PSO can also be seen in transplant recipients and Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia. Clinically, PSO initially appears as a chalky white discoloration of the proximal nail plate. KOH preparation of the dorsal nail plate is negative for fungal elements; the undersurface of the nail plate obtained by collecting a core of nail with a skin punch shows fungal elements on the undersurface of the involved nail plate. Unless immunocompromise is restored, dermatophyte infections are chronic and recurrent.⁸⁷ In that many patients are taking oral imidazoles, such as fluconazole or itraconazole for candidiasis or cryptococcosis, dermatophytoses are inadvertently treated and kept under control. Terbinafine, which is highly efficacious for dermatophytic infection, is not predicatably effective for nondermatophytic fungal infections.

Pityrosporiasis. *Pityrosporum ovale* (*P. orbiculare*, *Malassezia furfur*) can cause extensive pityriasis (tinea) versicolor, especially in diabetics and individuals treated with topical or systemic corticosteroids. *Pityrosporum* folliculitis, which occurs more commonly in HIV disease, transplant recipients, pregnancy, malignancy, and chronic renal failure, presents as multiple small folliculo-

centric papules and pustule (acneform) on the upper trunk.^{88,89} Diagnosis is made by demonstration of yeast in the follicular infundibulum. *Pityrosporum* folliculitis must be differentiated from both cutaneous candidiasis and hematogenously disseminated candidiasis to skin in the compromised host.⁹⁰ *Pityrosporum* may have some role in the pathogenesis of seborrheic dermatitis, which is common in HIV disease.

Candidiasis. Oropharyngeal candidiasis (OPC) associated with PCP in young homosexual men marked the advent of the HIV epidemic.⁹¹ OPC occurs in the majority of HIV-infected individuals during the natural course of HIV disease as a result of impaired cell-mediated immunity. The oropharynx is the most common site of mucosal candidiasis, which may extend into the esophagus and/or tracheobronchial tree in advanced HIV disease. Recurrent candidal vulvovaginitis (RVVC) is common in HIV-infected women and may be the first clinical expression of immunodeficiency.⁹² In contrast, *Candida* intertrigo, which is more common than mucosal candidiasis in the normal host, is uncommon in adults with HIV disease. Candidiasis of moist, keratinized cutaneous sites, such as the anogenital region, occurs frequently. Systemic infection originating in the bowel occurs in individuals with prolonged neutropenia. Oropharyngeal candidiasis in the absence of predisposing local or systemic causes should always raise the issue of HIV serotesting.

Candida colonization of the oropharynx is common in HIV-infected individuals.⁹³ In a study of HIV-infected outpatients (median CD4-cell count 113/ μ L), *Candida* species were isolated from the oral swabs in 60% of individuals, in the absence of any clinical findings of thrush.⁹⁴ *C. albicans* was the most prevalent colonizing species isolated from each individual. Five other species were also isolated, 22% of patients were colonized with 2 different *Candida* species. Isolation of non-*Albicans* species alone correlated with advanced HIV diseases with very low CD4-cell counts.

Oropharyngeal candidiasis is a marker of HIV disease progression.⁹⁵ In a study of the onset of oropharyngeal candidiasis after documented dates of HIV seroconversion, candidiasis was noted in 4% at 1 year after seroconversion, 8% at 2 years, 15% at 3 years, 18% at 4 years, 26% at 5 years; the median CD4-cell count was 392/ μ L when OPC

was first detected. OPC and esophageal candidiasis (EC) have been reported to occur as manifestations of primary HIV infection.⁹⁶ Esophageal candidiasis, an AIDS-defining condition, occurs only with advanced CD4 count reduction (<100/ μ L).

Although oropharyngeal candidiasis is often asymptomatic, the presence of white curd-like colonies of *Candida* in the mouth is a constant reminder of HIV disease to the patient. When symptomatic, common complaints associated with oropharyngeal candidiasis include a soreness or burning sensation in the mouth, sensitivity eating spicy foods, and/or reduced or altered sense of taste. Symptomatic esophageal candidiasis is less common than oropharyngeal infection and is usually, but not invariably, associated with oropharyngeal disease. The most common symptoms associated with esophageal candidiasis include retrosternal burning and odynophagia. Female patients with HIV infection are increasingly subject to vulvovaginal candidiasis associated with vulvar pruritus, dysuria, dyspareunia, and vaginal discharge.

On physical examination and esophagoscopy, oropharyngeal and esophageal candidiasis present most commonly with a pseudomembranous (thrush) pattern and less often with a chronic hyperplastic and/or atrophic pattern. Pseudomembranous candidiasis is characterized by white-to-creamy curd-like plaques on any surface of the oral mucosa, with these white areas being colonies of *Candida*. The "curds" are easily removed with a dry gauze (in contrast to the lesions of oral hairy leukoplakia that are relatively fixed to the underlying mucosa), with bleeding of the mucosa sometimes occurring. Atrophic candidiasis is often overlooked on examination of the mouth and is often the initial presentation of oropharyngeal candidiasis; it appears as patches of erythema, most commonly occurring in the vault of the mouth on the hard and/or soft palate. On the dorsal surface of the tongue, atrophic candidiasis causes areas of depapillation, resulting in a smooth red mucosa. There may be areas of pseudomembranous involvement at some sites, while others manifest the atrophic pattern. Chronic hyperplastic candidiasis presents as both red and white patches at any site in the oropharynx. In edentulous patients with dentures, pseudomembranous and/or atrophic candidiasis is typically seen under the mucosa occluded by dentures.

Candidal angular cheilitis occurs at the corners of the mouth as an intertrigo, unilaterally or bilaterally, and is more common in edentulous patients; it may occur in conjunction with oropharyngeal or esophageal disease or as the only manifestation of candidal infection.

Chronic and/or recurrent candidal vulvovaginitis is a common opportunistic infection in HIV-infected women with moderate-to-advanced immunodeficiency. Children with HIV infection commonly experience candidiasis in the diaper area, intertrigo in the axillae and neck fold.

The incidence of cutaneous candidiasis, ie, *Candida* intertrigo, may be somewhat increased in immunocompromised adults. Fingernail chronic *Candida* paronychia with secondary nail dystrophy (onychial) is common in HIV-infected children.⁹⁷

Candidemia occurs in HIV-infected individuals undergoing total parenteral nutrition, intravenous antibiotic therapy through a central venous catheter, or cancer chemotherapy, having a central venous catheter for >90 days. In a study of HIV-infected children with fungemia, non-*C albicans* species and *Torulopsis glabrata* were isolated relatively commonly.⁹⁸

Management of mucosal candidiasis should be directed at control of symptomatic candidiasis, which may be followed by secondary prophylaxis. Prolonged prophylaxis with topical or systemic agents increases the risk of azole-resistance infection. Topical treatments rely on high patient compliance in that they require administration 4 to 5 times daily, but they are usually preferred over systemic drugs for initial treatment. Agents for topical therapy of OPC include nystatin (suspension, tablets, pastilles),⁹⁹ clotrimazole (troche), itraconazole solution, fluconazole solution, and amphotericin B solution. The imidazoles, fluconazole (oral solution, tablets, intravenous solution), itraconazole (capsules, oral solution),¹⁰⁰ and ketoconazole (tablets) are available for systemic therapy. Terbinafine is an excellent agent for dermatophytoses but not for candidal infections.¹⁰¹ OPC relapses in approximately 40% of cases within 4 weeks of discontinuing therapy.

Secondary prophylaxis of OPC and EC is often indicated unless the immunocompromise is restored. Fluconazole-resistant oropharyngeal and/or esophageal candidiasis occurs relatively frequently in chronically treated patients.^{102,103} HIV-infected individuals taking fluconazole 200

mg/d prophylactically experienced reduction in the frequency of cryptococcal infection, EC, and superficial fungal infection, especially those with CD4-cell counts $\leq 50/\mu\text{L}$; but they did not experience reduction in overall mortality rate.¹⁰⁴ Despite fluconazole efficacy in preventing fungal infections, daily routine prophylaxis is not recommended for all individuals with advanced HIV disease because of cost, possible emergence of drug-resistant candidiasis, and potential drug interactions.¹⁰⁵

Invasive Fungal Infections Involving the Skin

The major importance of the cutaneous manifestations of systemic mycotic infection is that these manifestations may be the first clue to the presence of such disseminated infection. The most important examples of this phenomenon are disseminated cryptococcal infection, which occurs in approximately 10% of patients with untreated advanced HIV disease, and infection due to *H capsulatum* or *C immitis*. The latter are seen much less frequently, since exposures to these organisms occur only in geographically restricted areas (*H capsulatum* being found in the east central portion of the United States, Ohio and Mississippi river valleys, Virginia and Maryland, as well as parts of Central America, and in the case of *H capsulatum var duboisii*, Africa; *C immitis* being found in the desert soil of the southwestern United States, Mexico, and parts of Central and South America). In southeast Asia, systemic infection with *P marneffei* in HIV disease has been reported.¹⁰⁶

The pathogenesis of these infections resembles that of tuberculosis, in which the primary infection occurs in the lungs after the inhalation of air contaminated with these organisms. The initial response to this event is a polymorphonuclear leukocyte one, which serves to limit the extent of primary infection. However, the definitive host response is a cell-mediated immune response, which both limits the impact of postprimary systemic dissemination of the organisms and prevents the subsequent breakdown of sites of dormant infection. Thus, patients with advanced HIV disease are at risk for 3 patterns of infection: progressive, primary infection with systemic spread because of a failure of the normal cell-mediated immune response; reactivation of dormant sites of infection, with secondary systemic

dissemination of the organisms; and reinfection in a patient who has lost the protective immunity engendered years previously on exposure to this same organism, with such reinfection resulting in a pattern of disease akin to that seen in patients with progressive primary infection. Whenever systemic dissemination of these organisms occurs, there is an approximately 10% incidence of mucocutaneous disease, often as the first recognizable manifestation of systemic infection.¹⁰⁷

Skin lesions occurring in disseminated mycotic infections are, for the most part, asymptomatic apart from their cosmetic appearance. Thus, the symptom complex that the patient presents with is determined primarily by the other sites of involvement—symptoms referable to the respiratory tract in patients with active lung infection; symptoms referable to the central nervous system in patients with seeding of the central nervous system; and systemic complaints of fever, chills, sweats, weight loss, etc, dependent on the organism load and the intensity of the host inflammatory response.¹⁰⁸ Oral and/or esophageal ulcerations caused by *H capsulatum* may, however, be painful.

The most common appearance of skin lesions caused by systemic fungal infection in the HIV-infected individual is that of multiple molluscum contagiosum-like lesions, papules, or nodules occurring on the face.^{109,110} On occasion, these lesions may become ulcerated, taking on a herpetiform appearance. Other reported cutaneous findings include erythematous macules; necrotic or keratin-plugged papules and nodules; pustules, folliculitis, or acneiform lesions; vegetative plaques; or a panniculitis.¹¹¹ Facial lesions are most common, but lesions are also seen on the trunk and extremities. Oral mucosal lesions occurring in HIV-infected patients with disseminated mycotic infections include nodules and vegetations; ulcerations may occur on the soft palate, oropharynx, epiglottis, and nasal vestibule. These occur most commonly with histoplasmosis, occasionally in cryptococcosis but not in coccidioidomycosis. Hepatosplenomegaly and/or lymphadenopathy occur commonly in patients with disseminated histoplasmosis.

The cornerstone of diagnosis in this clinical situation is skin biopsy for culture and pathological examination. It is important to recognize that such biopsies have 2 purposes: diagnosis of a particular skin lesion and early recognition of

disseminated infection in an compromised host. Because of these dual objectives, any unexplained skin lesion in these patients should be considered for biopsy. Histologically, diagnosis is made by demonstration of fungal forms with H&E, PAS, or methenamine silver stain of the lesional biopsy specimens or of a touch preparation. Tzanck smears obtained by scraping the top of a lesion, placing the material on a glass slide, fixing with methyl alcohol, and staining with rapid Giemsa technique show multiple encapsulated and budding yeast. India ink preparation of lesional skin scraping can also be used to show encapsulated and budding cryptococcal yeast forms. Fungi can also be isolated on culture of the skin biopsy specimen.

The differential diagnosis of patients with skin lesions possibly caused by systemic fungal infection includes molluscum contagiosum, verruca vulgaris, verruca plana, disseminated herpetic or varicella infection, bacillary angiomatosis, and furunculosis. The diagnosis of cutaneous infection with *C neoformans*, *C immitis*, or *H capsulatum* is *prima facie* evidence of disseminated infection and must be treated as such.

Ubiquitous Fungi

Invasive candidiasis. Invasive candidiasis is the most common invasive fungal infection. *C albicans* causes 75% of cases of disseminated candidal infections; *C tropicalis*, 20% of cases. *C tropicalis*, however, causes 60% of cases of disseminated candidal infections with cutaneous involvement; *C albicans*, only 20%.¹¹² The gastrointestinal tract is the site of primary invasion; *Candida* enters blood vessels and disseminates widely. Diagnosis is often delayed because of the nonspecific clinical manifestations and difficulty in identifying *Candida* isolated on culture as a pathogen. The usual clinical scenario is of a patient with fever, neutropenia, clinical deterioration, and failure of response to multiple antimicrobial agents.

The cutaneous findings are usually subtle with erythematous papules (single, multiple, localized, or diffuse) arising on the trunk and proximal extremities^{113,114}; in some cases, papulonodules, purpura, central necrosis, ecthyma gangrenosum-like lesions, and nodular folliculitis occur in hair-bearing areas (heroin users).¹¹⁵⁻¹¹⁸ Other clinical findings include endophthalmitis seen on fundoscopic examination, arthritis, and muscle abscess.^{119,120} A touch preparation of a punch

biopsy specimen examined with KOH or Gram stain may show *Candida*, allowing rapid diagnosis.¹²¹ Lesional skin biopsy specimens show a range of inflammatory changes, ranging from a sparse perivascular mononuclear infiltrate to a leukocytoclastic vasculitis; *Candida* may be sparse or present in large numbers, in and around dermal blood vessels.

Cryptococcosis. *C neoformans* is the second most common fungal opportunist (*C albicans* being the most common, usually causing mucocutaneous infection as well as invasive disease) in the compromised host.^{122,123} Disseminated cryptococcosis is by far the most common life-threatening fungal infection in HIV disease. Cutaneous cryptococcosis occurs in 5% to 10% of individuals with disseminated infection¹²⁴ and is essentially always associated with systemic infection in advanced HIV disease (CD4-cell count <50/ μ L). Cutaneous manifestations can present 2 to 6 weeks before signs of systemic infection.

Hematogenous dissemination of *C neoformans* to the skin results in lesions of various morphologies, which are generally asymptomatic. The most common morphology of cutaneous cryptococcosis is of molluscum contagiosum-like lesions, ie, umbilicated skin-colored or pink papules or nodules (54%); other types of cutaneous lesions include pustules, cellulitis,¹²⁵ ulceration, panniculitis, palpable purpura, subcutaneous abscesses, and vegetating plaques.^{126,127} Lesions commonly occur on the face but may be widespread. Oral nodules and ulcers also occur alone or with cutaneous lesions. The papules and nodules of cryptococcosis range from solitary to >100 in number, are usually skin-colored, with little if any inflammatory erythema, and lack the central umbilication or keratotic plug characteristic of mollusca. Occasionally, crusting or ulceration occurs, resembling chronic herpetic ulcers. In more darkly pigmented individuals, lesions may be hypopigmented or hyperpigmented. Cutaneous cryptococcosis in some cases occurs in the absence of demonstrable fungal infection in the lung or meninges. Hematogenous dissemination of *H capsulatum* or *C immitis* can produce identical skin lesions on the face.

Cryptococcal cellulitis occurs after fungemia and most often occurs in the compromised host (corticosteroid therapy, systemic lupus, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, myeloma, chronic active hepatitis, cervical medullary tumor, congenital

lymphedema, congenital lymphedema with lymphopenia, liver transplantation, inflammatory bowel disease, and kidney transplantation). This fungal cellulitis presents with a single or multiple red, hot, tender plaque(s).^{128,129} Primary cutaneous cryptococcosis has been reported, presenting as a nodule, plaque or ulcer, in some cases with sporotrichoid spread.¹³⁰⁻¹³²

Aspergillosis. *Aspergillus* species are ubiquitous in the environment, in food, water, soil, plants, and decaying vegetation. Aspergillosis can involve the skin either as a primary cutaneous infection or secondarily via invasion into the skin from an underlying infected site (nose, sinuses, and orbit) or hematogenous dissemination to the skin (usually from a primary lung infection). Aspergillosis occurs in the setting of severe or prolonged granulocytopenia caused by cytotoxic therapy for leukemia or lymphoma, high-dose or prolonged systemic corticosteroid therapy in transplant recipients, or those with collagen vascular disease. Primary cutaneous aspergillosis occurs at sites of intravascular catheters and drainage tubes, use of arm boards, and extensive trauma or burns.^{5,133-136}

Primary cutaneous aspergillosis has been reported more commonly in children with acute lymphocytic leukemia. Lesions arise most commonly on the palm, initially with erythematous or purpuric papules that progress to violaceous plaques with hemorrhagic bullae, which, in turn, ulcerate and form necrotic eschars. Secondary cutaneous or disseminated aspergillosis presents as erythematous macules or papules that evolve to purpuric or necrotic lesions, hemorrhagic bullae, and subcutaneous nodules or abscesses.

Potassium hydroxide preparation of scraping from the inner aspect of the bulla roof shows large hyphae. Lesional skin biopsy shows regularly septate, dichotomously branching hyphal elements that may be angioinvasive, which must be differentiated from *Scopulariopsis*, *Pseudoallescheria*, *Fusarium*, and *Penicillium*. The majority of patients with invasive disseminated aspergillosis die, despite treatment with amphotericin B.¹³⁷

Sporotrichosis. *Sporotrix schenckii* is ubiquitous in the environment in rotting organic matter. Percutaneous inoculation results in limited forms of cutaneous sporotrichosis in immunocompetent individuals. In the compromised host, dissemination of local infection to other organs occurs from lung or skin foci. Dissemination of

sporotrichosis is associated with severe malnutrition, sarcoidosis, malignancy, diabetes mellitus, alcoholism, organ transplantation, and HIV disease. A range of cutaneous lesions includes papules to nodules, which may become eroded, ulcerated, crusted, or hyperkeratotic.^{138,139} Individual lesions may remain discrete or become confluent. Lesions are often disseminated but sparing the palms, soles, and oral mucosa. Ocular involvement results in hypopyon, scleral perforation, and prolapse of the uvea.¹⁴⁰ Joint infection with frank arthritis is also common in the disseminated form of sporotrichosis occurring in HIV disease. Other organs involved in disseminated sporotrichosis in HIV disease include joints, lung, liver, spleen, intestine, and meninges.

Mucormycosis. Mucormycosis is a group of infectious syndromes caused by *Mucor*, *Rhizopus*, *Absidia*, and *Cunninghamella* species, which have identical presentations and appear morphologically identical in tissue. Conditions predisposing to cutaneous mucormycosis include diabetes, severe thermal burns, trauma, leukemia, organ transplantation, and use of Elastoplast dressing. Superficial cutaneous mucormycosis presents as erythematous plaque with subsequent vesicles, pustules, and ulceration at sites dressed with contaminated elasticized adhesive tape. The fungus can also enter the skin via breaks caused by intravascular lines, injections, macerated skin, burns, or insect bites. The fungus causes a necrotizing infection with subsequent vascular invasion, soft tissue infection, necrosis, and ulceration.

Rhinocerebral mucormycosis occurs in the setting of poorly controlled diabetes (especially with ketoacidosis) and systemic corticosteroid therapy, particularly in patients with leukemia, lymphoma, or organ transplant recipients. Infection begins on the palate or in the nose and paranasal sinuses, spreading rapidly to the central nervous system via the orbit and cribriform plate. Infected mucosal sites are black and necrotic. With extension of infection through the nasal turbinates, orbital cellulitis occurs associated with extraocular muscle paresis, proptosis, chemosis, and eyelid edema. Histologically, broad, irregularly shaped nonseptate hyphae with right angle branching are seen in the infected tissue.

Phaeohyphomycosis. The phaeohyphomycoses present as a clinically varied group of fungal infections caused by dematiaceous (pig-

mented or black) fungi that in tissue appear as yeast-like cells, branched or unbranched septate hyphae, or a combination of these forms. Chromomycosis appears clinically as verrucous, nodular, or tumorous plaques with pseudoepitheliomatous hyperplasia, showing large, pigmented, round, thick-walled cells with septation (sclerotic or Medlar bodies). Mycetoma appears clinically as a tumor with draining sinuses and granules in the abscesses. The clinical presentation varies with the host's immune response. The causative fungi include *Exophiala*, *Phialophora*, *Fonsecaea*, *Cladosporium*, *Alternaria*, *Bipolaris*, *Curvularia*, and *Exserohilum* species.

In the compromised host, infection with dematiaceous fungi can present as primary subcutaneous phaeohyphomycosis, localized inoculation cutaneous phaeohyphomycosis, and systemic or invasive phaeohyphomycosis with secondary or metastatic cutaneous lesions. Primary inoculation phaeohyphomycosis may present with a spectrum of clinical lesions: ulcer with necrosis, subcutaneous cyst, boggy verrucous plaque, crusted nodule with pustules, subcutaneous abscesses with sinus tracts, dermatomal vesicles and crusts, fluctuant abscess with surrounding cellulitis, and a necrotic ulcerated plaque resembling ecthyma gangrenosum. Disseminated phaeohyphomycosis involving the skin presents as tender erythematous nodules, ulcerated papules, hemorrhagic pustules, and scaling hyperpigmented plaques.

Hyalohyphomycosis. The hyalohyphomycoses are a variety of opportunistic fungal infections caused by nondematiaceous molds or yeasts, having a nonseptated tissue form. The fungi in this group include *Fusarium*, *Penicillium*, *Paecilomyces*, *Acremonium*, and *Scopulariopsis* species.

Fusarium species are ubiquitous soil saprophytes. Risk factors for infection are granulocytopenia and systemic corticosteroid therapy. Localized cutaneous infection is associated with thermal burns, punctures, and intravascular lines and can be the source of hematogenous dissemination. *Fusarium* onychomycosis can be the source of disseminated *Fusarium* infection in the compromised host.^{141,142} Disseminated fusariosis is characterized by evolution of widespread cutaneous lesions from erythematous to necrotic lesions, propensity for vascular invasion and thrombosis with tissue infarction, and acute branching broad

septate hyphae.¹⁴³ Tissue infarction is also seen in the lesions of *Aspergillus* and *Mucor* infections.

The dimorphic fungus *P. marneffei* is the third most common opportunistic infection in HIV-infected residents of countries of southeast Asia and the southern part of China.^{144,145} In a report of 92 patients,¹⁴⁶ the clinical presentation included fever, weight loss, cough, anemia, and disseminated papular skin lesions (71%). The most common skin lesions were umbilicated papules, occurring most frequently on the face, ears, upper trunk, and arms. Genital ulcers were also reported, ranging in size from <1 cm to 3 cm in diameter. Oral lesions included papules and ulcers. *P. marneffei* preferentially disseminates to the lung and the liver as well.

Endemic Fungi

Fungi endemic to geographic regions cause primary pulmonary infection after inhalation of spores. Primary infection is usually asymptomatic, resolving undiagnosed. The organisms are normally contained by the immune system but not eradicated; immunosuppression late in life may lead to reactivation of the disease. In the immunocompromised host, the latent fungi reactivates in the pulmonary focus, causing infection in the lungs; invasion of blood vessels results in hematogenous dissemination to multiple organ systems. Alternatively, progressive primary infection can occur in the compromised host, again with systemic dissemination.

Blastomycosis. *B. dermatitidis* is endemic to the south-central and midwestern United States, the central provinces of Canada, and Africa. Blastomycosis occurs most often in apparently immunocompetent individuals; more severe or disseminated infections occur in compromised persons. Disseminated blastomycosis presents with hundreds of erythematous papules that progress to pustules.¹⁴⁷⁻¹⁴⁹

Coccidioidomycosis. *C. immitis* is limited to the semiarid areas of the southwestern United States, Mexico, and Central and South America. Latent pulmonary infection may become active and disseminate in pregnancy, those with African and Filipino ancestry, and immunocompromised individuals with advanced HIV disease, hematologic malignancies, or organ transplant. Cutaneous lesions of disseminated coccidioidomycosis are usually asymptomatic, beginning as papules,

evolving to pustules, plaques, or nodules with minimal surrounding erythema; lesions often resemble molluscum contagiosum.¹⁵⁰ In time, lesions may enlarge and become confluent, with formation of abscess, multiple draining sinus tracts, ulcers, subcutaneous cellulitis, verrucous plaques, granulomatous nodules, and, with healing, scars.¹⁵¹ Lesional biopsy specimens show sporangia, hyphal forms, and arthroconidia. Disseminated coccidioidomycosis is diagnosed culturally by isolating the fungus from infected tissues. Serum complement fixation titers are often helpful in diagnosis but may be negative in the setting of immunocompromise.

Histoplasmosis. *H capsulatum* is restricted to the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys, Virginia, and Maryland as well as parts of Central America; *H capsulatum* var *duboisii* occurs in Africa. In endemic geographic areas, eg, Indiana, disseminated histoplasmosis is the leading opportunistic infection in HIV disease. In a report from Kansas City of HIV-infected individuals, the annual incidence of histoplasmosis was 4.7%.¹⁵² The following were associated with an increased risk for histoplasmosis: a history of exposure to chicken coops, a positive baseline serology for complement-fixing antibodies to *Histoplasma mycelium* antigen, and a baseline CD4 of <150/ μ L. Disseminated histoplasmosis also occurs in young children, those with Hodgkin's disease, and patients treated with systemic corticosteroids or chemotherapy.

Disseminated histoplasmosis presents with a variety of cutaneous findings in approximately 10% of cases: erythematous macules; necrotic or keratin-plugged molluscum contagiosum-like papules and nodules; pustules, folliculitis, acneiform lesions, a rosacea-like eruption, guttate psoriasis-like eruption; ulcers; vegetative plaques; or panniculitis.^{111,153,154} Several different morphological lesions may occur on a patient. Lesions occur most commonly on the face, followed by the extremities and trunk. Oral mucosal lesions include nodules and vegetations; ulceration occurs on the soft palate, oropharynx, epiglottis, and nasal vestibule. A subtle, widespread, exanthematous or psoriasiform eruption may occasionally develop in HIV-infected patients already on systemic antifungal therapy and in whom systemic symptoms are completely lacking. Oral nodular and ulcerative lesions also occur in disseminated

histoplasmosis.¹⁵⁵ Hepatosplenomegaly and/or lymphadenopathy occur commonly in patients with disseminated histoplasmosis.

Viral Infections

Viruses are major pathogens causing opportunistic infections (OIs) in the compromised host, many of which are manifested at mucocutaneous sites, ranging from cosmetically disfiguring facial molluscum contagiosum virus (MCV) to extensive common or genital warts to life-threatening or invasive HPV-induced SCC. In the great majority of cases, viral OIs represent reactivation of latent viral infection, ie, herpes family of viruses or of subclinical infection with HPV or MCV.

Measles

Measles had been rare in the industrialized nations because of childhood immunization; however, in Third World countries such as in Africa, measles is common and associated with significant morbidity and mortality. In the United States, focal epidemics have occurred because of immunization failure. Measles occurring in the setting of HIV disease in unvaccinated persons has high morbidity and mortality rates.¹⁵⁶ The immunogenicity of the measles vaccine in children with HIV infection is low, with only 25% of immunized HIV-infected children developing antibody.¹⁵⁷ Clinically, measles occurring in HIV disease may be atypical with a prolonged period of rash or absence of exanthem or enanthem.^{158,159} Diagnosis of measles is usually made on clinical findings; however, in cases in which the exanthem is atypical, documentation of seroconversion is helpful. In some cases, seroconversion does not occur because of abnormal B-cell function; lesional skin biopsy is helpful, showing multinucleated keratinocytes. Children who develop measles may have a severe or an occasionally fatal infection.

Herpetoviridae (Human Herpesviruses)

Human herpesviruses (HHV), ie, HSV types 1 and 2, CMV,¹⁶⁰ VZV, EBV, HHV-6, HHV-7, and HHV-8, share 3 characteristics that make them particularly effective pathogens in the compromised host: latency (once infected with the virus, the individual remains infected for life, with immunosuppression being the major factor responsible for reactivation of the virus from a latent state); cell association (these viruses are

highly cell-associated, rendering humoral immunity inefficient as a host defense and cell-mediated immunity paramount in the control of these infections); and oncogenicity (all herpes group viruses should be regarded as potentially oncogenic, with the clearest demonstration of this being EBV-related lymphoproliferative disease).¹⁶¹ Of the herpes group viruses, those with the greatest impact on the mucocutaneous tissues of the compromised host are HSV, VZV, HHV-8 and, to a lesser extent, EBV.

Reactivated HHV infection can be particularly severe in compromised hosts, resulting in chronic persistent disease, and in some cases, life-threatening disease. Reactivated HHV infections may contribute to increased HIV expression and potentially modify and accelerate the course of HIV disease. Acute or chronic infections caused by HSV or VZV are usually treated until lesions have resolved, secondary prophylaxis not usually being required. CMV infections, especially retinitis, may be devastating and require life-long prophylaxis.

Corticosteroid therapy in HIV disease is of concern because of the possible risk of reactivation of HHV. In a report of patients treated with prednisone, the incidence of clinically active infections caused by CMV, HSV, and VZV that occurred within a 30-day period of therapy was compared for each group; the median total dose of prednisone was 1,600 mg.¹⁶² No statistically significant differences between the cases and controls were detected in terms of the incidence of clinically active herpesvirus infections, ie, CMV infection (2.5% v 5.0%), HSV (1.6% v 1.5%), and VZV (0% v 0.3%). Only CD4-cell count <50/ μ L was a significant risk factor for the development of any herpesvirus infection or for the development of a clinically active CMV infection. The risk of HHV infections was related to the stage of HIV infection and was not influenced by corticosteroid therapy.

Herpes simplex virus-1 and -2 infections.

The greater majority of HSV-1 and HSV-2 infections occurring in the compromised host are reactivations of latent infections. With mild immunocompromise, lesions are self-limited and resolve within a week or 2. Extensive, local cutaneous infections, ie, eczema herpeticum (Kaposi's varicelliform eruption), can occur with locally

impaired immune function (eg, atopic dermatitis) or in the systemically compromised host.¹⁶³

With more advanced compromise, lesions tend to be subacute or chronic, indolent, atypical, responding less promptly to oral antiviral therapy. Clinically, reactivated infections (ulcers) are larger and deeper. Ulcerated, crusted lesions at perioral, anogenital, or digital locations are usually HSV in etiology, despite atypical clinical appearances. HSV is a treatable cause of intraoral ulcers and should always be identified and treated in the compromised host. Disseminated HSV infection can involve the skin only or, of more concern, the viscera (lungs, liver, and brain), which has significant associated morbidity and mortality.

In 1981, chronic perianal herpetic ulcers associated with a severe, previously undetected, acquired immune deficiency were an early harbinger of the impending HIV epidemic.¹⁶⁴ Genital herpes and other genital ulcerative diseases are risk factors for acquisition of HIV infection during sexual intercourse.¹⁶⁵ The seroprevalence of HSV-2 infection in the United States is indicative of unprotected sexual intercourse and increased risk of HIV transmission.¹⁶⁶ Reactivated latent HSV infection is one of the most common OIs in HIV disease. Reactivation of latent HSV infection has been documented to increase HIV plasma viral load level¹⁶⁷; however, acyclovir use was not associated with prolonged survival.¹⁶⁸ Herpetic as well as other genital ulcers are risk factors for transmission of HIV.¹⁶⁵

During the asymptomatic phase of HIV infection, the clinical manifestations of HSV infection are no different from those occurring in the normal host—orolabial lesions, usually caused by HSV-1, or anogenital lesions, usually caused by HSV-2, triggered by such factors as fever, stress, other viral infections, or exposure to intense ultraviolet light. The lesions heal within 1 to 2 weeks with or without antiviral treatment. However, with progression of the immunodeficiency, recurrence, even after effective therapy, delayed healing, and chronic ulcers, occasionally caused by treatment-resistant strains of HSV, become common. Intermittent asymptomatic shedding of HSV is common. In a report of patients with advanced HIV disease, HSV was isolated on periodic culture of the perianal region in 24% of patients in the absence of erosive or ulcerative lesions, even among those without a history of

perianal HSV lesions.¹⁶⁹ Shedding was short-lived, intermittent, and not associated with early subsequent development of perianal ulcers.

With increasing immunocompromise, recurrent HSV infection may become persistent and progressive. Erosions occurring at the typical sites (perioral, anogenital, and digital) enlarge and deepen into painful ulcers.^{170,171} Oropharyngeal herpetic ulcers can occur alone or in association with lesions of the lip(s). Untreated, these ulcers may become confluent, forming large lesions.^{172,173} Herpetic infection of one or more fingers can form severely painful, large whitlows.¹⁷⁴ HSV can be inoculated into nearly any site, including the ears and toes.^{174,175} In addition to ulceration, chronic HSV infections can also present as proliferative lesions of the epidermis with or without scale. Herpetic ulcers on the buttocks, perineum, and anus can be associated with painful intra-anal or rectal HSV ulcerations. Genital herpetic ulcers are common. Untreated in individuals with advanced HIV disease, the ulcers persist and enlarge. Hematogenous dissemination with visceral infection is less common in HIV disease than in other compromised states. Large atrophic scars may follow healing of deep herpetic ulcers.

Symptomatically, recurrent herpetic infection is characterized by an itching or tingling sensation at the site, often before any visible alteration. Vesicles and pustules frequently rupture, leaving superficial erosions and ulcers, which are associated with varying degrees of discomfort and pain. A herpetic whitlow, for example, occurring on the distal finger is often associated with excruciating pain because of the closed tissue spaces involved and the extensive innervation of the site.¹⁷⁶ Herpetic ulcers on the anorectal mucosa cause pain on defecation, tenesmus, and constipation and, at times, are associated with HSV colitis and diarrhea. HSV from labial or oropharyngeal ulcers is swallowed in saliva and can infect the esophageal epithelium, usually in patients with very low CD4 counts. Esophageal herpetic ulcers present with odynophagia and/or chest pain.¹⁷⁷ Predisposing factors include nasogastric procedures, corticosteroid therapy, and cancer chemotherapy. Extraesophageal herpetic lesions (labial, oropharyngeal) are present in one third of patients with esophageal ulcers.

In patients with advanced immunodeficiency, recurrent lesions may fail to heal and continue to

enlarge, thus forming large, chronic ulcers.¹⁷⁸ In the absence of other causes of immunocompromise, chronic herpetic ulcers present for more than a month's duration is an AIDS-defining opportunistic infection. Such ulcers may develop on any mucocutaneous epithelium but are seen most commonly in perineal, anal, buttock, genital, perioral, and digital sites. Untreated or acyclovir-resistant HSV ulcers may become confluent, forming lesions up to 20 cm in diameter, involving half the face or perineum.

HSV infections can be diagnosed by isolation of the virus or identification of HSV antigen in lesional smears or biopsy specimens. If indicated, the isolate can be tested for sensitivity to various antiviral agents. Histology shows multinucleated giant epidermal cells indicative of HSV or VZV infection. The Tzanck test, which looks for giant epithelial or adnexal cells, preferably multinucleated, in smears of lesional exudate, is useful but is not always positive even in frank herpetic lesions; its reliability is completely dependent on the skill of the microscopist. Lesional biopsy is helpful when giant epidermal cells are detected but cannot distinguish HSV from VZV infection. Viral culture of a lesion has a high yield in making the diagnosis. The polymerase chain reaction can detect VZV and HSV-DNA sequences from a variety of sources including formalin-fixed tissue specimens.¹⁷⁹

Currently, 3 drugs are available for oral therapy of HSV infections; famciclovir¹⁸⁰ and valaciclovir are absorbed much better than acyclovir. These agents can be given to treat primary or reactivated infection or to suppress reactivation. In the management of chronic herpetic ulcers, immunosuppressive therapy should be reduced when possible. Intravenous acyclovir (5 mg/kg every 8 hours) may be given for severe infections; the improved blood levels of famciclovir and valaciclovir make oral therapy more effective than with oral acyclovir. Foscarnet and cidofovir are administered intravenously for infections caused by acyclovir-resistant HSV. Cidofovir gel has been effective as a topical therapy of acyclovir-resistant HSV infections.¹⁸¹ The use of chronic HSV suppression is controversial. The oral antiviral agents are indicated for frequently recurring HSV infection.

Varicella-zoster virus infections. Primary VZV infection manifests as varicella (chicken-

pox); reactivation of VZV from a dorsal root ganglion or cranial nerve ganglion manifests as HZ. In the compromised host, VZV infection can present as severe varicella, dermatomal HZ, disseminated HZ (sometimes without dermatomal HZ), and chronic or recurrent HZ. Disseminated HZ is defined as cutaneous involvement by >3 contiguous dermatomes or >20 lesions scattered outside the initial dermatome or systemic infection (hepatitis, pneumonitis, encephalitis). Disseminated VZV infection in an individual harboring latent VZV can present with a clinical pattern of scattered vesicles in the absence of dermatomal HZ. The compromised host previously infected with VZV is subject to exogenous reinfection with VZV.¹⁸² Underlying conditions of immunocompromise associated with an increased incidence of HZ include Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, solid tumors (eg, small cell carcinoma of the lung), solid organ and bone marrow transplantation, and HIV disease. Local immunosuppression related to irradiation, nodal involvement by tumor, or surgical sites is also associated with an increased incidence of HZ.¹⁸³

Primary VZV infection is nearly always symptomatic (ie, varicella or chickenpox)¹⁸⁴; reactivated infection presents as HZ. Children with HIV disease represent the largest reservoir of VZV-susceptible immunodeficient children in the world, numbering several million in Africa. Varicella occurring in HIV-infected children and adults can be severe, prolonged,¹⁸⁵ and complicated by VZV dissemination (pneumonia, hepatitis, encephalitis, and pancreatitis), disseminated intravascular coagulation, bacterial superinfection, and death. Primary, recurrent, and persistent VZV infections are a frequent cause of morbidity and hospitalization for HIV-infected children. Rather than resolving, persistent crusted lesions can occur at sites of initial vesicle formation, lasting for weeks or months. In a report of HIV-infected children with varicella, the most common complication was recurrence of VZV infection, in 53% of cases.¹⁸⁶⁻¹⁸⁸ Sixty-one percent of children experienced HZ during the first episode of reactivated VZV infection; 32% had dissemination of HZ, associated with a low CD4-cell count. A second episode of varicella can occur, presumably after exposure to a different VZV strain than that which caused varicella initially. In a study of 30 cases of varicella in HIV-infected children, 27%

developed HZ an average of 1.9 years after varicella (range, 0.8-3.7).¹⁸⁶⁻¹⁸⁸ Children with <15% CD4-cell levels at onset of varicella were at very high risk of reactivation. Of the children with HZ, 50% developed recurrent HZ episodes.

HIV-infected individuals who are seronegative for VZV, and hence are at risk for primary infection, should promptly receive zoster immune globulin on exposure to the virus and high-dose intravenous acyclovir (10 mg/kg every 8 hours) instituted at the earliest signs of primary infection. This disastrous illness is of primary concern in HIV-infected children, as >90% of the adult population in the United States is seropositive for VZV. Acute varicella does not appear to worsen the course of HIV infection with regard to CD4- or CD8-cell levels.

The more common problem in the compromised host is reactivated infection, where a latent virus present in the dorsal nerve root ganglia becomes reactivated.¹⁸⁹ Typically zoster occurs for the first time relatively early in the course of HIV disease, even before oral hairy leukoplakia and oropharyngeal candidiasis.^{190,191} Thus, among a group of 112 HIV-infected homosexual men with zoster, 23% had developed AIDS 2 years later, 46% 4 years later, and 73% 6 years later.¹⁹² The more extensive the dermatomal involvement, the greater the pain and involvement of cranial and cervical dermatomes, the more advanced the HIV infection is found to be. HZ is also common in other compromised hosts.^{193,194}

The first manifestation of zoster is often pain in the dermatome that subsequently manifests the classical grouped vesicles on an erythematous base. At times, multidermatomal involvement, either contiguous or noncontiguous, may occur. Zoster may also recur within the same dermatome or persist chronically for many months.¹⁹⁵ Occasionally in these patients, the dermatomal eruption may be bullous, hemorrhagic, necrotic, and accompanied by severe pain. Not infrequently, patients with zoster experience hematogenously borne cutaneous dissemination, without visceral involvement or inordinate morbidity. Persistent disseminated VZV lesions are often very painful and appear as crusted-to-hyperkeratotic plaques, 1 to 2 cm in diameter, occasionally with marginal vesicles.¹⁹⁶ These ecthymatous or chronic VZV infections are sparse, typically 5 to 15 in number, appearing on the trunk or proximal extremi-

ties.^{197,198} The majority of HIV-infected patients with zoster have an uneventful recovery.

HZ can be the initial clinical presentation of HIV disease. Those who acquire HIV infection sexually are reported to experience HZ more commonly than with those who acquire it by injecting drug use.¹⁹⁹ In a report from Kenya, 85% of patients (16-50 years old) presenting with HZ were HIV-infected.²⁰⁰ The duration of illness was longer in HIV-infected patients compared with non-HIV-infected cases of HZ (32 v 22 days). Seventy-four percent of HIV-infected individuals with HZ had generalized lymphadenopathy compared with only 3% in the noninfected group. Severe pain (69% v 39%), bacterial superinfection (15% v 6%), more than one affected dermatome (38% v 18%), and cranial nerve involvement were all more common in HIV-infected individuals with HZ. The mean CD4-cell count at presentation was 333/ μ L in the HIV-infected group and 777/ μ L in the HIV-negative group. Recovery was generally complete and uncomplicated. In Ethiopia, 95% of patients (mean age 35 years) with HZ ophthalmicus were reported to be HIV-infected.²⁰¹ Severe eyelid involvement occurred in 25%, ocular involvement in 78%, visual loss in 56%, and postherpetic neuralgia in 55%. Severity of HZ ophthalmicus was associated with delay in presentation, lack of antiviral therapy, and advanced HIV disease.

In a report of homosexual men observed after HIV-1 seroconversion, 20% had an episode of HZ after a mean follow-up of 54 months; 10% of those experienced one recurrence.²⁰² In a report of patients with advanced HIV disease (CD4-cell count <25/ μ L) treated with zidovudine, 16% had a history of HZ on enrollment and 13% of these had a recurrence during the 2-year follow-up.²⁰³ HZ was not associated with a more rapid progression to AIDS.

Major complications of HZ occur in one fourth of cases and include blindness (HZ ophthalmicus), neurological complications, chronic cutaneous infection, postherpetic neuralgia, and bacterial superinfection, all of which occur more commonly if the CD4-cell count is <200/ μ L.

HZ is a clinical indicator of faltering immunity and its occurrence should always raise the issue of HIV serotesting. The incidence of HZ in HIV disease is approximately 25%. In a cohort study of 287 homosexual men with well-defined dates of

HIV seroconversion and 419 HIV-seronegative homosexual men, the incidence of HZ was 15 times greater in HIV-seropositive men (29.4 cases/1,000 person-yr) than in HIV-seronegative men (2.0 cases/1,000 person-yr).²⁰⁴ The overall age-adjusted relative risk was 16.9.

HZ often occurs early in the course of HIV disease and can occur soon after varicella in children. In several studies, HZ was not predictive of faster progression to advanced HIV disease. Extent of dermatomal involvement, severity of pain, and involvement of cranial or cervical dermatomes have been correlated with a poor outcome of HIV disease.

In a study of men with HZ, the incidence of first episode was 52/1,000 person-yr in HIV-infected men and 3.3/1,000 person-yr in non-HIV-infected men.²⁰⁵ HZ recurred in 26% of HIV-infected men. The incidence of HZ increased by 31.2/1,000 PY at CD4 cells \geq 500/ μ L, 47.2/1,000 PY at CD4 cells 200 to 499/ μ L, and 97.5/1,000 PY at CD4 cells <200/ μ L. The incidence of HZ increases with the decrease in CD4 cell counts and T-cell reactivity, but HZ is not an independent predictor of disease progression.

Clinically, HZ is typical in most cases. In advanced HIV disease, the spectrum of lesions is much wider. Solitary or a few ulcerations can occur. Epidermal proliferative lesions, either solitary or a few, resemble basal cell or SCCs.²⁰⁶ Scattered or zosteriform verrucous lesions also occur.²⁰⁷ In advanced HIV disease, VZV can also infect the neural tissue of the central nervous system (encephalitis), retina (acute retinal necrosis), or the spinal cord, with or without cutaneous lesions.²⁰⁸⁻²¹¹ HZ precedes the onset of acute retinal necrosis by several days in 60% to 90% of cases.

In that zoster often occurs early in HIV disease, the course is fairly uneventful for the majority of patients. It is most often unidermatomal but may be multidermatomal, recurrent within the same dermatome, or disseminated. The eruption may be bullous, hemorrhagic and/or necrotic, and accompanied by severe pain. The majority of HIV-infected patients with HZ experience an uneventful recovery but atypical clinical courses are not uncommon. Limited cutaneous dissemination of zoster secondary to viremia is common in some patients with zoster but uneventful recovery is the rule. Ophthalmic zoster has the highest

incidence of serious complications, which include corneal ulceration, variable decrease of visual acuity,^{212,213} and retinal necrosis.²¹⁴ Viral encephalitis can occur via entry into the brain by VZV infection of the optic nerve,²¹⁵ or follow hematogenous dissemination.²¹⁶ Cutaneous dissemination of VZV in patients with HZ is relatively common²¹⁷; however, significant visceral involvement is rare. Viscerally disseminated HZ in a compromised host can be life-threatening.

In HIV disease individuals, cutaneous VZV lesions can persist¹⁹⁸ for months after either primary¹⁹⁷ or reactivated VZV infection with a pattern of zoster^{195,218} or disseminated infection,^{196,219} referred to as chronic verrucous or ecthymatous VZV infection. Lesions may persist for months, either in the localized or disseminated form, appearing as hyperkeratotic, ulcerated, painful nodules often with central crusting and/or ulceration with a border of vesicles.¹⁸⁹ A rare complication of zoster is the occurrence of a granulomatous vasculitis in the involved dermatome, without persistence of the VZV genome, possibly as a reaction to minute amounts of viral proteins.²²⁰

The diagnosis of varicella and HZ can be confirmed by detection of viral antigen on a smear of the base of a vesicle or erosion or in a section of a lesional biopsy specimen. A positive Tzanck test confirms the diagnosis of either VZV or HSV. Isolation of VZV on culture is more difficult than isolation of HSV. Lesional biopsy is also helpful to establish a diagnosis, especially in unusual manifestations of VZV infection such as ecthymatous or chronic verrucous lesions; the diagnosis is confirmed by detection of VZV antigen.

Administration of varicella vaccine in early HIV disease in children appears safe and beneficial. HIV-infected children exposed to VZV, whether varicella or zoster, may benefit by treatment with varicella-zoster immune globulin prophylactically, as well as acyclovir. Most persons with zoster occurring in early HIV disease do well without antiviral therapy. The same drugs approved for treatment of HSV are approved for treatment of VZV infection: famciclovir, valaciclovir, and acyclovir. Intravenous acyclovir (10 mg/kg every 8 hours) is given for severe infections. Because of the risk of visual impairment after ophthalmic zoster, intravenous acyclovir is usu-

ally given. As with HSV infections, acyclovir-resistant strains emerge after prolonged acyclovir treatment; most of these resistant strains respond to foscarnet therapy. Secondary prophylaxis is usually not indicated after VZV infection resolves.

The cornerstone of treatment for serious VZV infection is intravenous acyclovir. Valaciclovir and famciclovir, as well as acyclovir, are effective orally after initial intravenous therapy or for less severe VZV infections. As with HSV infection, acyclovir-resistant VZV has been reported after chronic acyclovir therapy for persistent or recurrent VZV infection.^{221,222}

Epstein-barr virus infections. EBV selectively infects cells of the B-lymphocyte lineage and certain types of squamous epithelium. The majority of adults have been infected with EBV and harbor the latent virus. EBV infection plays an important role in the pathogenesis of 3 important clinical conditions in the HIV-infected patient population: OHL, classic Burkitt's lymphoma, and EBV-positive large cell lymphoma. Of these, OHL is the one with primary effects on the mucocutaneous tissues and correlates with moderate-to-advanced HIV-induced immunodeficiency.^{223,224} EBV DNA can be detected in the oral epithelium in HIV-infected patients without clinical signs of OHL and its detection may be a marker for symptomatic HIV disease.²²⁵ Whether OHL develops after reactivation of latent EBV or superinfection is uncertain.²²⁶

OHL is a lesion specific to HIV disease. OHL has been reported in up to 28% of HIV-infected patients and is more common in males.^{227,228} In a study of OHL as a clinical marker of HIV disease progression, OHL was detected in 9% of individuals 1 year after seroconversion, in 16% at 2 years, 15% at 3 years, 35% at 4 years, and 42% at 5 years.⁹⁵ The median CD4-cell count when OHL was first detected was 468/ μ L. In individuals without an AIDS-defining illness when OHL is first detected, the probability of developing AIDS (without HAART) has been reported to be 48% by 16 months after detection and 83% by 31 months.²²³ Persons with OHL and a history of hepatitis B virus infection have a 4-fold risk for early progression to AIDS; those with syphilis have nearly a 3-fold risk for early AIDS diagnosis.²²⁹ In a study of HIV-associated mucocutaneous disorders in 456 patients (1982-1992),²³⁰ OHL was diagnosed in 16% of cases, when the

median CD4-cell count was 235/ μ L. Median survival time after OHL diagnosis was 20 months. In patients with a CD4-cell count \geq 300/ μ L, the detection of OHL was associated with shorter median survival time of 25 months compared with 52 months in those without OHL.

OHL typically presents as hyperplastic, verrucous, whitish, epithelial plaques on the lateral aspects of the tongue, frequently extending onto the contiguous dorsal or ventral surfaces.²³¹ Usually, a single lesion or 3 to 6 discrete plaques separated by normal-appearing mucosa is observed. Much less commonly, OHL occurs on the buccal mucosa opposing the tongue and on the soft palate. Although described as hairy, the most frequently noted appearance of the lesion occurring on the tongue is a corrugated appearance, with parallel white rows arranged nearly vertically. Useful diagnostic criteria for OHL are: a white lesion, involvement of the lateral aspect of the tongue, lack of change in appearance with rubbing, and no response to antifungal therapy. Differential diagnostic considerations include hyperplastic oral candidiasis, condyloma acuminatum, geographic (migratory) glossitis, lichen planus, tobacco-assisted leukoplakia, the mucous patch of secondary syphilis, SCC, and occlusal trauma.

For the most part, OHL is asymptomatic but its presence may be associated with some degree of anxiety. Patients should be reassured and advised that OHL is not thrush. With HAART, OHL usually resolves without additional interventions. In concerned patients with persistent lesions, topically applied podophyllin in benzoin is effective; recurrence within weeks to months is common. Acyclovir, valacyclovir, famciclovir, ganciclovir, or foscarnet given for other indications are often effective therapies for OHL.

Posttransplant cutaneous B-cell lymphoma, associated with EBV infection, is an uncommon complication of solid organ transplantation.²³² Findings are usually confined to the limited regions of the skin; systemic involvement is not common. Treatment is usually directed at the lesions, with surgery or radiotherapy.

Cytomegalovirus. Seroprevalence studies of CMV infection indicate that 50% of the general population is infected by age 50. The seroprevalence is much higher in lower socioeconomic groups and among injecting drug users. Most

cases of primary CMV infection are asymptomatic; after primary infection, CMV enters a latent phase of infection, during which asymptomatic viral shedding in saliva, semen, and/or urine is extremely common. In the compromised host, CMV disease occurs via primary CMV infection, reactivation of latent CMV infection, or reinfection with a new CMV subtype. In most cases, CMV disease represents reactivation of latent virus. CMV infection often occurs soon after immune suppression associated with cancer chemotherapy, organ transplantation, and systemic corticosteroid therapy. CMV is the most common viral pathogen in patients with advanced HIV-induced immunodeficiency. In a study of 82 HIV-1-seropositive persons, 51.7% of those with either AIDS-related complex (ARC) or AIDS had evidence of CMV infection of circulating polymorphonuclear cells, whereas no infection was detected among the 50 asymptomatic HIV-infected persons.

Manifestations of CMV infection include retinitis, esophagitis, colitis, gastritis, hepatitis, and encephalitis. In a multicenter study of 1,002 persons with AIDS or ARC, median survival after diagnosis of CMV disease was 173 days, and CMV was an independent predictor of death.²³³ Disseminated CMV has been shown in 93% of patients with AIDS; at autopsy, however, association with skin lesions was not reported. CMV reactivation and dissemination are common events as immunodeficiency worsens. As an opportunistic organism CMV commonly infects the retina, causing a sight-threatening retinitis,²³⁴ and the large intestine, causing colitis manifested by intractable diarrhea. Widespread infection is associated with a generalized wasting syndrome, pneumonitis, and encephalitis. CMV infection, although present within various organs as documented by viral culture, is not necessarily the cause of the tissue dysfunction.¹⁶⁰

Specific CMV-induced skin lesions have not been identified in compromised individuals. Cutaneous ulcers and a morbilliform eruption are the most common presentation of cutaneous CMV involvement.^{31,235-237} Evidence for CMV infection in a variety of mucous membrane lesions, implied by specific cytopathic changes in biopsy specimens by light and electron microscopy, immunofluorescence, immunoperoxidase, and in situ hybridization techniques, has been

reported^{238,239}; however, the role of CMV in pathogenesis of the lesions is not certain. Perianal ulceration caused by CMV occurs as the infection spreads from contiguous gastrointestinal sites. CMV was considered to be the cause of perianal and oral ulceration in 5 patients with advanced disease studied, based on typical histological changes and positive fluorescent monoclonal anti-CMV antibody studies. Empirical treatment with acyclovir failed, but all ulcers healed with either foscarnet or ganciclovir treatment. Other reported presentations of CMV infection in skin of HIV-infected individuals include macular purpura of the extremities associated with leukocytoclastic vasculitis and small, keratotic, verrucous lesions, 1 to 3 cm in diameter, scattered on the trunk, limbs, and face.

Human herpesvirus-8 (Kaposi's sarcoma-associated herpes virus). KS is a hemangioma-like proliferation of endothelial-derived cells, first reported by Moritz Kaposi in 1872 as "idiopathic pigmented sarcoma of the skin." Classical KS occurs in men of Mediterranean or Eastern European ancestry and presents clinically as slowly growing tan-to-violaceous papules, nodules, and tumors on the lower extremities. In the 1950s, African KS was described in children from equatorial Africa. In the 1960s, a third variant of KS was described in patients on long-term immunosuppressive therapy (ie, recipients of organ transplants). Most recently, in 1981, epidemic or HIV-associated KS was one of the first disorders to be identified in patients with AIDS. Most cases of HIV-associated KS occurred in homosexual or bisexual men. Early in the HIV epidemic, approximately 40% of homosexual or bisexual men with AIDS had KS; however, more recently the prevalence of KS appears to have declined. In all other groups at risk for HIV infection, the prevalence of KS has been and remains at the 1% to 3% level.

Although the clinical course of HIV-associated KS may be quite variable, it is far more aggressive than other variants of KS with the frequent occurrence of widespread cutaneous and visceral lesions.²⁴⁰ Early lesions of HIV-associated KS present as slight discolorations of the skin, usually barely palpable papules and, if very early, macules. These lesions arise within the dermis, lacking any epidermal change, and are pinkish in color, with faint hues of tan, yellow, and green (biliverdin), giving the appearance of a bruise.

Over a period of weeks-to-months-to-years, these early lesions enlarge into nodules or frank tumors, and the color darkens to a violaceous, "Concord grape" color, often with a yellow-green halo. As lesions enlarge, epidermal changes may occur, showing a shiny, atrophic appearance if stretched or, at times, hyperkeratosis with scale formation. In late lesions, tumor necrosis may occur with erosion or ulceration of the surface. Oral lesions are common and may be the first site of involvement, occurring typically on the hard palate as a violaceous stain of the mucosa.

Although HIV-associated KS can occur at any site on the skin, certain sites are much more common than others. On the head and neck, lesions commonly develop on the tip of the nose, cheeks, eyelids, and ears. In time, discrete lesions may coalesce, forming large plaques. Occasionally, KS lesions may form on the bulbar conjunctiva, appearing as a subconjunctival hemorrhage. Facial edema is common, caused by lymphatic obstruction by the KS lesions, and is sometimes extreme, causing gross distortion of the patient's appearance. In some patients, visible lesions are scanty or absent and the presentation of the KS is predominantly that of edema isolated to the face and/or one or more of the extremities. In a study of 173 patients with epidemic KS the distribution of mucocutaneous lesions were: trunk, 52%; legs, 45%; arms, 38%; face, 33%; and oral cavity, 40%. Koebnerization of KS lesions has been reported at sites of venipuncture, BCG injection, abscess formation, and contusions.

Although the diagnosis of KS can usually be suspected clinically, in most instances histological diagnosis on a lesional punch biopsy specimen should be accomplished. The differential diagnosis of possible KS lesions depends on the stage of disease encountered. An early, nearly macular (patch stage) lesion can be mistaken for a bruise, a hemangioma, a dermatofibroma, an insect bite, or a benign nevus. More advanced, nodular or plaque KS lesions must be differentiated from psoriasis, lichen planus, secondary syphilis, insect bites, benign nevi, nonmelanoma cancer, melanoma, and metastatic visceral malignancies. Once the individual KS plaque or tumorous lesions have coalesced to form tuberous lesions, the major alternative diagnosis is lymphoma.

The course of KS depends on restitution of immune function. Few patients die from compli-

cations directly related to KS. Currently, individuals with untreated HIV disease still present with KS. With effective response to HAART, KS is relatively uncommon and, if present, usually regresses or resolves without specific therapy for KS. Without immune restitution by HAART, however, established KS lesions tend to enlarge in size and deepen in color, at times coalescing, while more and more lesions appear. An occasional patient will develop KS lesions involving internal organs in the absence of any visible mucocutaneous involvement. At postmortem examination, most patients with KS will be found to have lesions in the gastrointestinal tract, lymph nodes, liver, lung, spleen, and/or kidneys. In addition, there appears to be an increased incidence of second malignancies in patients with AIDS-associated KS.

In the management of KS, the initial therapeutic focus is reduction in immune compromise by changing immunosuppressive drug therapies or by effective treatment of HIV disease with HAART. In many cases, KS will regress or resolve. For persistent KS, a spectrum of increasingly aggressive therapies is available.

Localized cutaneous disease is best treated with application of a retinoid gel, intralesional injection of vinblastine,²⁴¹ cryotherapy,²⁴² surgical excision, or radiation. Indolent, disseminated cutaneous KS is best treated with systemic immunotherapy or chemotherapy. Systemic α interferon is effective in indolent or slowly growing KS in patients with CD4-lymphocyte counts $>400/\text{mm}^3$ who have few systemic symptoms and no opportunistic infections (40%-50% response rate, although this rate may be higher when zidovudine is also administered). Because of its slow onset of action, usually requiring 6 to 8 weeks for an initial response, systemic α interferon is inappropriate therapy for rapidly growing KS. In such patients, and those who fail to respond to interferon therapy, chemotherapy akin to that used for the more aggressive forms of the disease may then be employed. Systemic chemotherapy is indicated for aggressive disseminated and/or visceral KS. The chemotherapeutic agents of choice are vincristine and bleomycin, both of which are marrow-sparing agents, usually in combination with adriamycin. Such regimens yield a significant response in 79% of cases. Liposome-encapsulated doxorubicin has en-

hanced tumor uptake and lesser systemic side effects. Paclitaxel may be effective as a single agent. Antiviral agents, effective in treatment of HHV-8 infection, may be effective in treatment of KS.^{243,244}

Molluscum Contagiosum

MCV commonly infects keratinized skin subclinically and can cause lesions at sites of minor trauma and in the infundibular portion of the hair follicle.²⁴⁵ Transmission is usually via skin-to-skin contact, occurring commonly in children and sexual partners. The clinical course of MCV infection in HIV disease differs significantly from that in the normal host and is an excellent clinical marker of the degree of immunodeficiency.²⁴⁶ In adults with multiple mollusca occurring outside of the genital area, especially head and neck lesions, HIV infection should be considered. Large and confluent lesions cause significant morbidity and disfigurement. Extensive MCV infection is uncommon in other compromised adults such as those with atopic dermatitis,²⁴⁷ sarcoidosis,²⁴⁸ cutaneous T-cell lymphoma,²⁴⁹ lymphatic leukemia, lymphoma,²⁵⁰ and thymoma.²⁵¹

Prior to HAART, MCV infections were detected in 10% of individuals with HIV disease, and in 30% of those with CD4-cell counts $<100/\mu\text{L}$, the number of lesions being inversely related to the CD4-cell count.²⁵² In a study of 27 HIV-infected patients with MCV infection,²⁴⁶ mean CD4-cell count was 85.7 cells/ μL within 60 days of mollusca diagnosis; 52% of patients had facial and neck lesions alone and 26% had lesions in areas associated with sexual transmission. PCP had previously occurred in 30% of individuals and KS had been diagnosed in 56%.

Clinically, MCV infection presents as skin-colored papules or nodules, often with a characteristic central umbilicated keratotic plug. Lesions are usually 2 to 6 mm in diameter but may be >1 cm in diameter (giant molluscum). Large lesions may mimic epidermal inclusion cysts, arising on or about the ear or on the trunk. Shortly after their appearance, lesions may be solitary; in time, multiple lesions are more typical (50+ lesions). With persistent and progressive immunodeficiency, mollusca may continue to enlarge and proliferate, resulting in confluent masses of lesions, eg, involving the entire beard area. Large and/or multiple confluent facial lesions cause

significant cosmetic disfigurement. The most characteristic sites of occurrence in HIV-infected adults are on the face, beard area, neck, and scalp; anogenital and intertriginous (axillae, groins) involvement is also common. In men, lesions are often confined to the beard area, the skin having been inoculated during the process of shaving. Occasionally, lesions become secondarily infected with *S aureus*, resulting in abscess formation or with *P aeruginosa* with resultant necrotizing cellulitis. Significant postinflammatory hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation, more pronounced in more heavily melanized skin, may occur after cryosurgery of lesions, adding to the cosmetic disfigurement of the mollusca.

The diagnosis of MCV infection in the HIV-infected patient is usually made on clinical grounds but histological confirmation is required in some patients. The differential diagnosis of solitary molluscum contagiosum includes verruca vulgaris, condyloma acuminatum, basal cell carcinoma, keratoacanthoma, and SCC. The differential diagnosis of multiple facial mollusca contagiosa includes hematogenous dissemination to the skin of invasive fungal infections (cryptococcosis, histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, and penicilliosis). Lesional skin biopsy is indicated in patients with sudden appearance of mollusca-like facial papules associated with fever, headache, confusion, or pulmonary infiltrate to rule out deep mycosis with hematogenous dissemination to the skin.

In HIV-infected individuals, MCV infection tends to be progressive and recurrent after the usual therapies. MCV has been shown within clinically normal epidermis surrounding lesions, suggesting the mechanism by which new lesions recur at treatment sites in HIV-infected individuals.^{253,254} With response to HAART, MCV infections regress or resolve completely, associated with increased CD4-cell counts and reduced viral load level.²⁵⁵

Therapeutically, the most efficacious approach toward MCV infection is correction of the underlying immunodeficiency; if this can be accomplished lesions regress. If correction of immunodeficiency is not possible, treatment is directed at controlling the numbers and bulk of cosmetically disturbing lesions rather than at eradication of all lesions. Liquid nitrogen cryospray is the most convenient therapy and usually must be repeated

every 2 to 4 weeks. Electrosurgery is more effective than cryosurgery; local anesthesia is required by most subjects with either injected lidocaine or eutectic mixture of local anesthetics cream. CO₂ or pulse-dye laser ablation is also effective but relatively costly. Five percent imiquimod cream applied 3 times a week is an effective patient administered therapy in children and adults. Cidofovir, a nucleotide analog with activity against several DNA viruses, given either intravenously or topically as a cream, may be an effective therapy.²⁵⁶

Human Papillomavirus Infections

Subclinical infection with HPV is nearly universal in humans. With immunocompromise, cutaneous and/or mucosal HPV infection (re)emerges from latency, presenting clinically as verruca, condyloma acuminatum, squamous intraepithelial lesion (SIL), SCC in situ (SCCIS), or invasive SCC.²⁵⁷ HPV colonizes keratinized skin of all humans producing common warts (verruca vulgaris, verruca plantaris, verruca plana) in many healthy individuals during the course of lifetime. The greater majority of sexually active individuals are subclinically infected with one or multiple HPV types. HPV-6 and -11 infect mucosal sites (genitalia, anus, perineum, oropharynx) and cause genital warts (condyloma acuminatum); HPV-16 and -18 cause precancerous lesions SIL, SCCIS, and invasive SCC.

In organ transplant recipients, HIV-infected individuals, and other compromised hosts, verrucae are not unusual in morphology, number, or response to treatment; however, with advancing disease, verrucae can enlarge, become confluent and unresponsive to therapy.²⁵⁸ HPV-5 can cause an unusual pattern of extensive verruca plana and pityriasis (tinea) versicolor-like warts, similar to the pattern seen in epidermodysplasia verruciformis. With moderate or advanced immunodeficiency, warts and condyloma may become much more numerous, confluent, and refractory to usual treatment modalities. Precancerous lesions identical to mucosal lesions, namely SIL and SCCIS, can occur periungually on the fingers. In some cases, invasive SCC can arise at one or multiple sites on the fingers and/or nail bed. These tumors are aggressive and invade to the underlying periosteum and bone relatively early

caused by the proximity of the underlying bony structures.

HPV-induced SIL, SCCIS, and invasive SCC of mucosal sites, especially the transitional epithelium of the cervix and anus, are increasingly more common in HIV disease. SIL and SCCIS occur despite maintained or improved immune function as a result of HAART. Invasive cervical SCC has been added to the list of AIDS-defining conditions. HPV-induced neoplasms may well be diagnosed more frequently as the lifespan of persons with HIV diseases is increased with treatment.

HPV DNA is 2 to 3 times as frequent in cervicovaginal-lavage specimens and almost 15 times as common in anal-swab specimens from HIV-infected women as in those from HIV-seronegative women.^{259,260} HIV-seropositive women are 5 times as likely as HIV-seronegative women to have vulvovaginal condyloma and oral or anal SIL.^{261,262} The increased prevalence of HPV-induced lesions in HIV disease probably is related to deficient cell-mediated immunity rather than impaired specific antibody formation.²⁶³ Increased HPV replication of the more oncogenic HPV types occurs with more advanced immunosuppression.²⁶⁴

In a study of the association between anal SIL, HPV infection, and immunosuppression among HIV-seropositive and HIV-seronegative homosexual men, anal HPV DNA was detected in 55% of HIV-seropositive and 23% of HIV-seronegative men by Southern transfer hybridization and in 92% and 78% by polymerase chain reaction.²⁶⁵ Anal SIL was noted in 26% of HIV-seropositive and in 8% of HIV-seronegative men; high-grade SIL was noted in 4% of HIV-seropositive and in 0.5% of HIV-seronegative men. Among HIV-infected men, anal SIL, detection of specific anal HPV types, and detection of high levels of anal HPV DNA were all associated with advanced HIV disease. The risk of anal SIL among HIV-seropositive men with CD4 <500 was increased 2.9-fold over that of HIV-seropositive men with CD4 counts >500.

In a study of HPV infection in HIV-seronegative and -seropositive women, HPV DNA was detected in 83% of the seropositive and 62% of the seronegative women.²⁵⁹ Twenty percent of seropositive women and 3% of seronegative women had persistent infections with HPV-16-associated

viral types (16, 31, 33, 35, 58) or HPV-18-associated types (18 or 45), which are most strongly associated with cervical cancer. HIV-infected women were noted to have a high rate of persistent HPV infections with the types of HPV that are strongly associated with the development of high-grade SIL and invasive SCC.

The degree of immunosuppression correlates with the presence of HPV DNA, extent of HPV infection, and potential for malignant transformation, individuals with CD4-cell counts <200/mL being at greatest risk.²⁶⁶ The potential for malignant transformation varies considerably according to the type and site of HPV-infected epithelium, being greatest for the transitional epithelium of the cervix and anus, lesser for vulvar epithelium, and least for the epithelium of the male genitalia, perineum, inguinal folds, and perianal regions. The immune mechanisms underlying the increased rates of anogenital neoplasia in HIV-infected individuals²⁶⁷⁻²⁷⁰ are not well understood but are thought to be related to high prevalence of HPV infection, impairment of cellular immunity, activation of latent HPV replication, and local suppression of cytokine production.

With advanced immunodeficiency, low-grade SIL or high-grade SIL, caused most frequently by HPV-16 and -18, can arise on epithelium of the cervix, external genitalia, perineum, anus, oropharynx, or keratinized skin, especially the nailbeds. Although differentiation from condyloma cannot be made on clinical grounds alone, SIL and SCCIS often present as multiple, smooth, pink or skin colored to tan/brown macules or papules, which may form confluent, cobblestoned, well-demarcated plaques. Lesions are usually multifocal but may be unifocal. In some cases, multiple foci of epithelial erosion occur and concomitant herpetic infection must be ruled out. Massive HPV-induced lesions (older terminology giant condyloma of Buschke-Löwenstein) have a much greater chance of showing foci of SIL, SCCIS, or invasive SCC histologically. Extragenital HPV-induced SIL, SCCIS, and invasive SCC also occur in keratinized skin, such as the nailbeds.^{271,272}

Oropharyngeal HPV-induced lesions resemble anogenital condyloma, pink or white in color, but never the tan-to-brown color of some genital lesions. Extensive intraoral condyloma acuminatum (oral florid papillomatosis) presents as mul-

tiple large plaques, analogous to anogenital giant condylomata acuminata of Buschke-Löwenstein, and can also transform to verrucous carcinoma.

The diagnosis of verrucae and condylomata is usually made on clinical findings. In individuals with advanced HIV disease, biopsy of suspected HPV infections of the anogenital region is recommended because of the high prevalence of SIL and SCCIS. Exfoliative cytology is very effective at detecting SIL or SCC of the cervix and may also be helpful with anal involvement.²⁷³ External anogenital SIL and SCCIS, unlike cervical and anal lesions, cannot be screened for by the Pap test using exfoliative cytology. Lesional biopsy specimens should be obtained from several sites, especially in individuals at higher risk for malignant transformation. In most patients, histological findings are relatively uniform at multiple biopsy sites, ranging from low-grade or high-grade SIL to SCCIS. At one point in time, invasive SCC is, however, usually unifocal within a field of SCCIS. A larger nodule within a field of SIL or SCCIS should be excised to rule out invasive SCC. Over the course of HPV-induced neoplasia, multiple invasive SCCs may arise at various anogenital epithelial sites.

The natural history of external anogenital HPV-induced neoplasia is probably similar to that of condyloma acuminatum. Prolonged, severe immunodeficiency provides the necessary milieu for the emergence of HPV-induced anogenital neoplasia. The incidence of transformation of SCC *in situ* to invasive SCC appears to be low. The relative risk for HPV-related anal SCC is much higher in HIV-infected than in non-HIV-infected homosexual men and is more likely in advanced HIV disease.

Invasive cervical SCC is an AIDS-defining condition; however, a documented increase in incidence has not yet been reported. Cervical and anal neoplasias are likely to become more common manifestations of HIV disease as patients with profound immunodeficiency, who would previously have succumbed to OIs, are now surviving for extended periods because of increasingly effective antiretroviral prophylaxis of OIs and newer antimicrobial therapies. External anogenital SIL and SCCIS may also become more common in long-term survivors of HIV disease.

Low-grade or high-grade SIL of the external anogenital epithelium can be treated by several

methods: topical chemotherapy (5% 5-fluorouracil or 5% imiquimod cream, especially for extensive multifocal lesions); surgical excision of single or several lesions; focal destruction of lesions by cryosurgery, electrosurgery, or lasersurgery. Unlike topical 5-fluorouracil or imiquimod, surgical modalities treat only clinically detectable lesions and not subclinical infection. For minimally invasive SCC arising in an area of external anogenital SCCIS, surgical excision is recommended with adequate borders around the lesion. The role for adjunctive radiotherapy has neither been defined nor has the use of combined modality therapy with external beam radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Individuals with documented external anogenital high-grade SIL or SCCIS should be observed by periodic follow-up examinations (every 3 to 4 months), noting the appearance of new lesions at these sites or an enlarging nodule or ulcerated site; biopsy of these sites is recommended. In that HPV-induced neoplasia may extend to the cervix and/or anus, direct examination by speculum and anoscope should also be performed; samples for cytology should be obtained using a cervical brush and cytofix solution.

The number of individuals with SIL/SCCIS of the external anogenital region is expected to grow with the increasing numbers of long-term survivors of HIV disease. The prevalence of HPV infection of nonkeratinized and mucous epithelium in HIV-infected homosexual men is high, up to 20% having clinically detectable anogenital condylomata and up to 50% having infection detectable by cytological smears of anal canal mucosa.²⁷⁴ HPV types 6 and 11, which in the normal host infect the anogenital epithelium and are of low oncogenic risk, can be shown in extensive verruca on the hands and feet and in invasive anogenital SCC of HIV-infected men. Similarly, HIV-infected women have rates of cervical dysplasia 5 to 10 times higher than non-HIV-infected women. Thus, in one group of HIV-infected women, three fourths had vulvar HPV infection, two thirds of these having condylomata, and one third vulvar intraepithelial neoplasia.^{275,276}

Verrucae occurring in HIV-infected individuals are usually asymptomatic, with the most common complaint being a cosmetic one. Warts on the plantar aspect of the foot can become large and

painful. Verruca vulgaris and verruca plantaris appear as well-demarcated keratotic papules or nodules, usually with multiple tiny red-brown dots representing thrombosed capillaries; palmar and plantar warts characteristically interrupt the normal dermatoglyphics. They may be numerous and confluent, giving the appearance of a mosaic. Verruca plana appears as a well-demarcated, flat-topped papule, which lacks the dots seen in other types of verrucae.^{277,278} When present in the beard area, hundreds of flat warts may be present. All types of verrucae may have a linear arrangement due to koebnerization or autoinoculation.

Condylomata acuminata are usually asymptomatic, although voluminous lesions may be painful and bleed.²⁷⁹ Pain associated with HPV infection most commonly is caused by therapy but is also sensed in voluminous verrucous masses. Condylomata appear as well-demarcated papular or nodular lesions arising anywhere on the anogenital, vaginal, cervical, rectal, or oropharyngeal epithelium. Lesions may be numerous and become confluent. The prevalence of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia is increased in HIV disease; however, the prevalence of invasive SCC of the cervix is not certain at this time.²⁷⁶ Intraepithelial neoplasia involving the anogenital skin is also increased; there may also be an increase in the incidence of invasive SCC.^{280,281}

The diagnosis of verrucae and condylomata is usually made on a clinical basis. Acetowhitening, the appearance of white micropapules or macules after the application of 5% acetic acid (white vinegar) to the anogenital epithelium, can be helpful in defining the extent of HPV infection. The diagnosis of intraepithelial neoplasia and invasive SCC can only be made histologically, and atypical lesions should be biopsied. The differential diagnosis of verrucae includes molluscum contagiosum, various benign and malignant epidermal neoplasms, KS, deep mycotic lesions hematogenously disseminated to the skin, and bacillary angiomatosis. The differential diagnosis of condylomata acuminata includes various benign and malignant mucocutaneous neoplasms, condylomata lata of secondary syphilis, and molluscum contagiosum.

Efficacy of treatment of verruca vulgaris and condyloma acuminatum in HIV disease varies with the degree of immunocompromise. In patients with early disease, these lesions should be

managed as in the normal host. In patients with advanced HIV-induced immunodeficiency complete eradication of benign HPV-induced lesions is unlikely, and aggressive treatment such as laser surgery is contraindicated.²⁸² Cytological smears and/or lesional biopsies should be obtained to monitor the evolution from cytological atypia to intraepithelial neoplasia or invasive SCC.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Genital ulcer disease caused by syphilis, genital herpes, and chancroid has been associated with increased transmission of HIV.

Syphilis

Coinfection with *Treponema pallidum* and HIV interact at several levels.^{283,284} Both are sexually transmitted diseases and may be acquired from a dually infected sex partner. Primary syphilis (characterized by chancres or ulcers on the vulva, cervix, penis, anus, rectum, or oropharynx) facilitates acquisition of HIV because of the break in the integrity of the epithelium. Syphilis occurring in more advanced HIV disease can present with highly atypical findings: the immunologic defects associated with HIV infection may block the appearance of the usual antibody response to *T pallidum* infection, so that false negative serological tests for syphilis can be observed in the face of active and even progressive infection; the clinical manifestations of the disease may be altered, the response to therapy decreased; the duration of the stages of syphilis may be greatly telescoped, all caused by the immunocompromised state of the host.

Shortly after *T pallidum* penetrates the intact mucous membrane or abraded skin, it spreads via lymphatics and the systemic circulation. Healing of the primary chancre, control of the infection in draining lymph nodes, the development of lesions at metastatic sites, the rapidity with which normally late manifestations of syphilis develop, the clinical manifestations of the infection, and the response to antimicrobial therapy are all influenced by the degree of immunocompromise present. Thus, the greater the immunocompromise, the slower the healing, the greater the organism burden, the more common systemic spread, the more rapid the development of "late stage" disease, and the more likely the failure of conventional antimicrobial therapy, particularly if

bacteriostatic drugs such as doxycycline or erythromycin are used.

The majority of HIV-infected persons who acquire syphilis have the expected clinical course of disease and the expected serological findings in serum and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), and they respond to the recommended therapeutic regimens. In a small percentage, however, the clinical manifestations, clinical course, serological response, and response to antibiotic treatment are unusual, especially with moderate-to-advanced HIV-induced immunodeficiency. In that unusual clinical presentations or failures of treatment are reported as single or a few cases, the percentage of cases of syphilis in HIV-infected patients with an unusual clinical course of disease is unknown. An inadequate immune response to *T pallidum* is considered to cause the various abnormalities in the course of syphilis in the HIV-infected patient.^{285,286}

Not uncommonly, however, the extent of ulceration is far greater than normally seen, and multiple chancres may be observed.²⁸⁷ Instead of healing within 3 to 6 weeks, persistent ulceration may occur.

Any of the clinical manifestations of secondary syphilis that occur in the normal host may occur in HIV patients.²⁸⁸ In addition, lues maligna, a rare form of secondary syphilis characterized by pleomorphic skin lesions including pustules, nodules, ulcers, and a necrotizing vasculitis may be seen.²⁸⁹ However, the most notable aspect of syphilis in the HIV-infected individual is the rapid progression of disease, such that normally late sequelae of *T pallidum* infection may be observed in <6 months after primary infection, even in the face of normally adequate therapy.^{290,291}

In general, HIV-infected individuals with syphilis have a higher incidence of systemic symptoms, simultaneous multiorgan involvement, atypical rashes, and are particularly prone to the development of neurosyphilis and uveitis. Because of the malignant course of the disease and the unreliability of traditional diagnostic and therapeutic approaches, both an aggressive biopsy and treatment program are essential.

The cornerstone of the diagnostic approach to syphilis in non-HIV-infected individuals is serological testing.^{292,293} However, since both false-positive and false-negative results occur in HIV-infected persons,^{294,295} such testing must be

supplemented by biopsies of suspicious lesions.²⁹⁶ Fluid from such lesions should be examined immediately by dark-field microscopy. In addition, specific immunofluorescent or immunoperoxidase staining of the pathological specimens can lead to the definitive diagnosis. The differential diagnosis of syphilitic cutaneous lesions is quite broad, depending on the particular lesion being considered. Thus, the differential diagnosis of primary lesions of syphilis mainly includes herpes simplex infection, chancroid, and bacterially infected genital lesions of any cause, although, under appropriate epidemiological conditions entities such as donovanosis, lymphogranuloma venereum, mycobacterial infection, and tularemia must be considered. The differential diagnosis of secondary syphilis includes drug eruption (eg, captopril), pityriasis rosea, infectious exanthems, infectious mononucleosis, tinea corporis, tinea versicolor, scabies, "id" reaction, condylomata acuminata, acute guttate psoriasis, and lichen planus. The differential diagnosis of tertiary syphilis includes lymphoma, tuberculosis, sarcoidosis, and deep fungal infections.

In HIV-infected patients with syphilis, 2 rules of clinical management apply: (1) disseminated infection, particularly with central nervous system involvement, should be assumed and appropriate therapy for neurosyphilis should be prescribed for any patient coinfecting with syphilis and HIV who has evidence of compromised immune function, regardless of the apparent clinical stage of syphilis observed; (2) close follow-up with repeated clinical, serological, and cerebrospinal fluid examinations are necessary, as even the best of regimens will sometimes fail in HIV-infected patients with significant immunocompromise.^{297,298}

In a report of syphilis and HIV infection, 23% of individuals who presented with syphilis were concurrently HIV-infected.²⁹⁹ The clinical presentation of syphilis in patients with HIV infection differs from that of patients without HIV infection in that patients with HIV infection present more often in the secondary stage (53% v 33%) and those with secondary syphilis are more likely to have chancres (43% v 15%).

HIV testing is advised for all sexually active patients with syphilis. Although uncommon, seronegative primary and secondary syphilis have been reported in HIV-infected individuals.²⁹⁴

Nearly all HIV-infected individuals with symptomatic neurosyphilis have positive syphilis serologies.²⁹⁵ Normally, treponemal tests remain positive throughout life. However, 7% of asymptomatic HIV-infected patients with a history of syphilis and 38% of those with symptomatic HIV infection with a history of syphilis have been reported to lose reactivity of treponemal tests.³⁰⁰

Neurosyphilis should be considered in the differential diagnosis of neurological disease in HIV-infected persons. When clinical findings suggest syphilis but serological tests are negative or confusing, alternative tests such as biopsy of lesions, dark-field examination, and direct fluorescent antibody staining of lesion material should be used.

In comparison with HIV-seronegative individuals, HIV-infected patients who have early syphilis may be at increased risk for neurological complications and may have higher rates of treatment failure with currently recommended regimens. The magnitude of these risks, although not defined precisely, is probably minimal. No treatment regimens for syphilis are demonstrably more effective in preventing neurosyphilis in HIV-infected patients than the syphilis regimens recommended for HIV-seronegative individuals. Careful follow-up after therapy is essential.

The current Centers for Disease Control (Atlanta, GA) recommendations for treating early syphilis appear adequate for most patients, whether or not HIV infection is present.^{301,302}

Penicillin regimens should be used whenever possible for all stages of syphilis in HIV: benzathine penicillin G, 2.4 million U intramuscular, as for HIV-seronegative individuals. Some authorities advise CSF examination and/or treatment with a regimen appropriate for neurosyphilis for all patients coinfecting with syphilis and HIV, regardless of the clinical stage of syphilis. Patients should be observed clinically and with quantitative nontreponemal serological tests (venereal diseases research laboratory, rapid plasma reagin) at 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, and 12 months after treatment. Patients with early syphilis whose titers increase or fail to decrease 4-fold within 6 months should undergo CSF examination and be retreated. In such patients, CSF abnormalities could be caused by HIV-related infection, neurosyphilis, or both.²⁸³ In that *T pallidum* may persist in the central nervous system of the HIV-infected patient de-

spite adequate antibiotic treatment, the possibility of chronic maintenance treatment, analogous to secondary prophylaxis of cryptococcal meningitis, has been raised.

Parasitic Infestations

Protozoan infections are among the most common opportunistic infections in HIV disease; mucocutaneous involvement, however, is uncommon.³⁰³

Extrapulmonary Pneumocystosis

P carinii is a common opportunistic pathogen in untreated HIV disease with CD4 counts <200 cells/ μ L, most commonly causing pneumonia (PCP). Extrapulmonary pneumocystosis can be rare at the initial presentation of HIV infection, manifested by unilateral or bilateral polypoid masses, and may be accompanied by loss of hearing. Similar lesions may occur at the tympanic membrane, middle ear, and mastoid air cells, associated with retrograde spread via the eustachian tube. Gangrene of the foot has been reported in a patient with widespread pneumocystosis; microemboli containing *P carinii* were present in smaller arterioles and capillaries within necrotic skin of the toes. Widespread violaceous papules and nodules arising on the torso, arms, and legs, resembling KS, have been reported.³⁰⁴

Strongyloidiasis

Once infected with *Strongyloides stercoralis*, the organism persists in the host via autoinoculation. In the compromised host with underlying conditions such as chronic infection (HIV disease, tuberculosis, lepromatous leprosy), neoplasms (lymphoma, leukemia), or organ transplantation, the number of filariform larvae can increase tremendously resulting in disseminated strongyloidiasis or hyperinfection syndrome.

Disseminated strongyloidiasis should be considered in the following circumstances³⁰⁵: (1) eosinophilia may be modest or absent; systemic corticosteroids and host debilitation may suppress this characteristic finding; the presence of eosinophilia should initiate a vigorous search for parasites; (2) unexplained and/or persistent bacteremia with enteric organisms despite administration of appropriate antibiotics; (3) serious infection (pneumonia, meningitis, bacteremia) from a suspected intra-abdominal source; (4) nonspecific gastroin-

testinal symptoms (abdominal pain and distention, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting); (5) nonspecific pulmonary symptoms and signs (cough, wheezing, hemoptysis, transient interstitial infiltrates); (6) concurrent infection or prior therapy for other intestinal parasites; (7) history of residence or travel to an endemic area even many years previously.

Clinically, periumbilical purpura is suggestive of disseminated strongyloidiasis. The ecchymoses are said to resemble multiple thumbprints on the abdominal wall, radiating from the umbilicus to the flanks and lower extremities.³⁰⁶ Fine petechiae are also seen having a reticulated pattern of linear and serpiginous purpuric streaks.³⁰⁷

Leishmaniasis

Following asymptomatic or symptomatic primary infection, *Leishmania* often remains latent in the reticuloendothelial system. Subclinical *Leishmania* infection is common in Mediterranean countries; 5% to 15% of adults in parts of Italy have a positive leishmanin skin test.³⁰⁸ In previously infected individuals, antigen-specific T cells and natural killer cells interact with parasitized phagocytes in an equilibrium such that only a very low level of replication of *Leishmania* occurs. In HIV-infected persons the equilibrium is lost.³⁰⁹ As immunodeficiency progresses, the protozoans may escape confinement by immune surveillance and cause visceral leishmaniasis (VL) (kala-azar). Reactivated leishmaniasis also occurs in organ transplant recipients.

Coinfection with HIV and *Leishmania* has been reported in >700 patients living in the Mediterranean basin, with the greatest number in Spain. In southern Europe, 50% of adult VL cases have occurred in HIV-infected individuals; 1.5% to 9% of HIV-infected individuals have either newly acquired or reactivated VL. More than 400 cases of coinfection with HIV and *Leishmania* have been reported from Spain, 85% in injecting drug users (IDU). Person-to-person transmission of *Leishmania*, as well as HIV, has been suggested in IDUs. VL may be the presenting manifestation of HIV disease. The course of persons who harbor *Leishmania* and HIV remains poorly defined. Coinfection of HIV and *Leishmania* in other sites of endemic leishmaniasis such as Kenya, Sudan, India, and Brazil is not well defined.

No characteristic skin lesions have been described in HIV disease. Normal skin may also be parasitized. Cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) usually represents primary infection presenting in multiple crusted papulonodules in sites exposed to insect vectors, disseminated nodules,³¹⁰ as well as an erythrodermic and dermatomyositis-like eruption.³¹¹ A generalized psoriasiform eruption has been reported in a patient with VL.³¹² Leishmaniasis can also present at sites of HSV or VZV infection or of KS in HIV-infected individuals with CL or VL.³¹³ Digital necrosis has been reported associated with leishmanial vasculitis.³¹⁴

Diagnosis may be confirmed by demonstration of *Leishmania* on lesional skin biopsy and/or bone marrow aspiration. Leishmanial serology is often negative. The incidence of relapse of visceral leishmaniasis is high in HIV-infected individuals.

American Trypanosomiasis (Chagas' Disease)

American trypanosomiasis can reactivate in patients with cardiomyopathy treated with cardiac transplantation and present with lesions resembling soft tissue infection.³¹⁵⁻³¹⁹ In transplant recipients, trypanosomiasis reactivates with clinical presentation of fever, heart failure, and soft tissue infection on the trunk and/or lower extremities. *Trypanosoma cruzi* can be detected on lesional skin biopsy.

Acanthamoebiasis

Acanthamoebae are free-living amoebae, which can enter the upper respiratory tract, disseminate hematogenously, and cause encephalitis and disseminated cutaneous lesions in advanced HIV disease. Cutaneous lesions initially appear as erythematous dermal-to-subcutaneous papules and/or nodules that suppurate, forming abscesses and ulcerations.³²⁰⁻³²³ Acanthamoebic cysts and trophozoites, which resemble macrophages, can be visualized in lesional biopsy specimens with periodic acid-Schiff (PAS) or Gomori's methenamine silver stain and immunofluorescence techniques.³²⁴ A leukocytoclastic vasculitis can also occur. The organism can be isolated on culture of a biopsy specimen.

Protothecosis

Prototheca species are algae found in water, sewage, soil, and trees; *P wickerhamii* is the only

one capable of infecting humans. Human infection occurs at sites of traumatic inoculation, producing localized infection in the olecranon bursa in the normal host. In the compromised host, lesions occur at the site of inoculation and have a widely varied clinical appearance, ranging from papules, vesicles, ulcers, or verrucous plaques.^{325,326} Disseminated infection can occur after localized cutaneous lesions, such as an insect bite in the compromised host.³²⁷ *Prototheca* can be identified by PAS and silver stains of lesional biopsy specimens and isolated on Sabouraud's dextrose agar.

Arthropod Infestations

Crusted (Norwegian) Scabies

Crusted or hyperkeratotic or Norwegian scabies occurs in compromised hosts. Currently in the United States, HIV disease is the most common associated immunocompromised state; crusted scabies also occurs in leprosy (the original report of crusted or Norwegian scabies was in lepers from Norway), Down syndrome, transplant recipients,³²⁸ chronic lymphocytic leukemia,³²⁹ adult T-cell leukemia,³³⁰ solid tumors, and vasculitis.

In obtunded or compromised individuals, pruritus may be diminished or absent in crusted scabies. Scabetic infestation can be severe, with millions of mites infesting the skin, presenting as a hyperkeratotic dermatitis but resembling atopic erythroderma, psoriasis vulgaris, keratoderma blennorrhagicum, keratosis follicularis (Darier's disease), or seborrheic dermatitis (in infants).³³¹ Thickly crusted plaques occur on the ears, buttocks, and extensor surfaces of the extremities, palms, and soles. Heavy infestation occurs around the nails with nail dystrophy and subungual and periungual scale-crust.^{332,333} Scabetic infestation, which usually spares the head and neck in adults, can be generalized. *S aureus* and gram-negative superinfection can occur, which has been complicated by septicemia and death.^{288,334,335} Because of the number of organisms in crusted scabies, recurrences are common and hospital epidemics may occur.

Use of potent topical corticosteroids for such previously diagnosed pruritic conditions may mask the presence of scabetic infestation. Eradication of the infestation is difficult because of the number of organisms. Topical treatment with

gamma benzene hexachloride, permethrin lotion, or 10% sulfur ointment is effective; total body application is required. Keratolytic agents are needed to debride hyperkeratotic areas, in conjunction with debridement of involved nails. Orally administered ivermectin has been reported to be effective in scabies.^{336,337}

INFLAMMATORY DISORDERS THAT SIMULATE INFECTION IN THE COMPROMISED HOST

Several inflammatory cutaneous disorders occur in the compromised host, which can be mistaken for infections. These disorders are treated with anti-inflammatory agents such as corticosteroids. Antibiotics are ineffective for treating these disorders; surgical debridement is contraindicated.

HIV-Associated Eosinophilic Folliculitis

Eosinophilic folliculitis (EF) is a relatively common pruritic eruption of sterile pruritic papules and pustules on the face, trunk, and extremities.³³⁸ The eruption occurs nearly exclusively in HIV disease, presenting in either advanced HIV disease or during immune reconstitution after initiation of HAART.³³⁹ Histologically, neutrophilic and eosinophilic infiltration of the hair follicles is observed. A clinical entity (Ofuji's disease) with identical histology occurs in non-HIV-infected individuals. Clinically, however, non-follicular pustules, coalescing plaques, and urticarial lesions are seen. A 1- to 2-week course of oral corticosteroids is highly effective in providing symptomatic relief of EF. Agents used for long-term suppression of EF included topical corticosteroid preparations, ultraviolet B phototherapy, and oral agents, such as isotretinoin and itraconazole.

Neutrophilic Dermatoses

Acute Febrile Neutrophilic Dermatitis (Sweet's Syndrome)

Acute febrile neutrophilic dermatosis presents as painful inflammatory plaques often accompanied by fever, arthralgia, and peripheral leukocytosis (neutrophilia). Multiple lesions arise acutely, are tender and/or painful, and occur most commonly on the face, neck, arms, and legs. Systemic symptoms of fever, headache, arthralgia, and malaise often accompany the cutaneous manifestations. Sweet's syndrome occurs as a paraneoplas-

tic reaction pattern and is associated with various infections and inflammatory disorders (parainflammatory). Approximately 10% of cases of Sweet's syndrome are associated with malignancies, ie, preleukemias (myelodysplastic syndrome, leukemias, and solid tumors). When associated with an underlying malignancy, Sweet's syndrome persists for months or years. The treatment of choice for Sweet's syndrome is prednisone 70 mg tapered over 1 to 2 weeks. Lesions recur unless the underlying malignancy is effectively treated.

Pyoderma Gangrenosum

Pyoderma gangrenosum is a rapidly evolving, idiopathic, chronic, and severely disabling skin disease, characterized by the sudden occurrence

of single or multiple inflammatory plaques. Approximately half of cases are idiopathic, whereas others are associated with paraproteinemia, myeloma, and leukemia. Surgical debridement is contraindicated, for any trauma to the skin of these individuals can cause the lesions to flare at that site. The most effective agents for management are oral corticosteroids and cyclosporin A.

CONCLUSION

Both the physician and the compromised patient should routinely examine the skin for cutaneous and subcutaneous lesions. This evaluation enables the skin to be used as an early warning system of serious infection. Unexplained skin lesions should be evaluated by biopsy for culture and histological examination.

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