

## An unusual toxic dermatitis caused by a rope in the sea

**Ozgur Deniz Tezcan**

American Hospital, Turkey

In a clinic, situated in the Mediterranean coast of Turkey, multiple cases of painful dermatitis were observed. In all of the patients, only thing in common was contact with a rope in the sea. This rope, together with some floaters, was used as a swimming area liner of a holiday resort. The reaction caused burning pain, itching and erythema. The pain was so disturbing that in some of the patients, standard antihistaminic and NSAID medication was not sufficient and narcotic analgesics and steroids were administered. Although no systemic or long-term effect was observed, this unusual reaction aroused curiosity. Samples were collected from the rope and analyzed in the MAREM Oceanography Lab in Istanbul. Among many organisms identified, the only organism that had stinging capacity was *Pennaria disticha*, a benthic hydrozoa. *P. disticha*, also known as the feather hydroid, is known to be a common organism throughout the tropical and subtropical coastal habitats. Although *P. disticha* looks like seaweed, it is in the cnidaria genus and a close relative to jellyfish. From lethal to mild, cnidarian venoms are known to have diverse toxicological effects. To the best of our knowledge, there is no toxicological study investigating the medical and pharmacologic effects of *P. disticha* venom. This is another example showing that there are still uninvestigated toxic organisms and biotoxins in our near vicinity.

### Biography

Ozgur Deniz Tezcan has completed his medical education at the age of 25 years from Ankara University. He is working in the American Hospital, Istanbul as a family physician. He has published a paper in a reputed journal about the dermatitis caused by *P. disticha*. He has special interest in toxic marine life.

[ozgurtezcan@gmail.com](mailto:ozgurtezcan@gmail.com)