

A Case of Persistent Angioedema

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I read with interest the unusual case presented by Escudero Pastor et al [1] about a woman with persistent palpebral and periorbital edema due to *Demodex folliculorum*. The authors characterize the case within the general context of angioedema, which is surprising, considering that the edema was not episodic but continuous for more than a year and a half.

Angioedema is defined as a kind of edema that fulfills certain specific requirements [2], namely, a sudden, pronounced swelling of the lower dermis and subcutis that is sometimes more painful than itching, with frequent involvement below the mucous membranes and—relevant in the current report—resolution that can take up to 72 hours. As this was not the case in this patient, all tests and the differential diagnosis performed within the context of angioedema were unnecessary and, in fact, irrelevant.

Angioedema can be recurrent but certainly not persistent. As specialists in allergy and immunology, we should be careful to use the term angioedema appropriately.

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Reply to “A Case of Persistent Angioedema”

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Angioedema is swelling in which the overlying skin or mucous membrane is normal in color or erythematous. It typically lasts no more than 72 hours before resolving. However, swelling present in other diseases could be often confused with angioedema, for example, in symmetrical facial or hand puffiness associated with female hormonal changes, peripheral edema present in venous insufficiency, congestive heart failure, kidney or liver disease, and persistent facial edema due to superior vena cava syndrome [1].

In our paper, the patient had persistent swelling that fluctuated in intensity over time and met some of the characteristics of histaminergic angioedema, such as erythema and pruritus [2-4]. Therefore, even though this was not a typical case, we must, as allergists, rule out other causes of edema or angioedema.

Finally, the term *persistent angioedema* has been used in several publications to describe conditions in which edema lasts more than 72 hours [5-9].

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