Temporary tattoos made by using Indian henna have become very popular. As a result, reports of allergic contact dermatitis from a temporary henna tattoo have increased. Presently described is the case of a 15-year-old boy who developed contact dermatitis and cellulitis after receiving a second temporary henna tattoo. He was treated with local and systemic medication. There was persistent hyperpigmentation at the tattoo site 15 days after the application. Allergic contact dermatitis from temporary tattoos, especially PPD, is a growing problem worldwide. Cross-reaction to related compounds and permanent skin changes are a frequent consequence of sensitization to this significant allergen.

Keywords: Allergic contact dermatitis, henna, temporary henna tattoo
Discussion

Temporary Indian tattoos are especially preferred with particularly teenagers and children because it is cheap, painless, easily applicable and disappears in a very short period of time. It is used for hair, skin and nails for religious, traditional and cosmetic reasons. It is a greenish powder made from the leaves of Lawsonia alba (family Lythraceae). It is used alone or in combination with other agents, such as para-phenylenediamine (PPD), vinegar, olive oil, coal and clove. Especially PPD in these agents is a strong allergen and aggravates the complication risk, including allergic contact dermatitis or immediate-type hypersensitivity reactions, if they want to use for the third time. Therefore the agents of temporary henna tattoo should be actively controlled, and the public should be educated about the risk of allergic contact sensitization and of the serious long-term complications.

Disclosures

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Conflict of Interest: None declared.


References