

Chapter 16:

Algorithmic approach to a dermatological diagnosis



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basic lesion

cause

picture

alphabetical

16.1 Urticaria

Physical Urticaria?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	
Provoked by direct contact with a substance?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	
Genetic origin?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	
Systemic origin?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	
Medicamentouse or food allergy?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	
Infectious origin?	No	Yes ▶
	▼	

To conclude this pictorial presentation of the most common skin diseases for the general practitioner, we thought it would be interesting to include the modern diagnostic procedure in dermatology applied to an everyday problem: urticaria.

If duration is longer than 6 weeks:
Chronic idiopathic urticaria



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Physical urticaria

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Simple or retarded
dermographism

Aquagenic urticaria

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Solar urticaria

Vibratory angio-oedema

[Click](#)[Click](#)

Cholinergic urticaria

Delayed pressure
urticaria

[Click](#)[Click](#)

Cold urticaria

No Physical urticaria

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Heat urticaria

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Physical urticaria



Simple or retarded dermographism

Rub with a blunt tip.

other disease

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Physical urticaria



Solar urticaria

Photosensitivity test.

other disease

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Physical urticaria



Cholinergic urticaria

Small papules induced by heat, physical effort, stress.

other disease

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Physical urticaria



Cold urticaria

Test with ice cube sheathed in plastic.

other disease

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Physical urticaria

Heat urticaria

Test with test-tube of hot water.

Aquagenic urticaria

Immersion test: hand in water at ambient temperature.

Vibratory angio-oedema

Professional circumstances
(particularly pneumatic hammer).

other disease

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Physical urticaria



Delayed pressure urticaria

Test by pressure with a weight strapped on to the body.

other disease

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Provoked by direct contact with a substance



Contact urticaria

Rapid result patch test, prick test or scratch test.

other origin

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Genetic origin



Hereditary angioneurotic oedema

Investigate for deficiency of C1 esterase inhibitor.

other origin

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Systemic origin



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Lesions persisting at the same place for more than 24h, not very itchy, accompanied by joint pains and myalgias; histopathological appearance that of vasculitis.

Investigate for:

- acute lupus erythematosus (1-3)
- Still's disease
- macroglobulinaemia
- blood disease
- hyperthyroidism
- urticarial vasculitis (4)

other origin

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Medicamentous or food allergy



Painstaking history with regard to drugs and food

- Drugs
Especially acetylsalicylic acid (see photos)
- Food
Especially preservatives and colourings

Do provocation tests.

other origin

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Infectious origin



- Hepatitis A (photo)
Exceptional case of figured urticaria revealing hepatitis A in its initial phase. The yellowish colour of the central oedematous (urticated zone) is caused by accumulation of bilirubin in the oedema fluid.

- Hepatitis B or C
- Infectious mononucleosis
- Parasitosis
- Focus of bacterial infection
- Focus of mycotic infection

other origin

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