Terra Firma-Forme Dermatosis

A 10-year-old boy with a history of atopy was referred to the outpatient dermatology clinic with long-standing brownish verrucous plaques with a ‘dirt’-like appearance on the glabellar region, posterior neck, superior trunk and lower extremities including peri-malleolar and dorsal feet.

Terra firma-forme dermatosis is an idiopathic acquired retention hyperkeratosis with asymptomatic brown plaques that can easily be removed with isopropyl alcohol rubbing, the so-called wipe test. Although frequently described in children, it is also common in adults and older individuals. The main differential diagnoses are dermatitis neglecta, confluent and reticulated papillomatosis, acanthosis nigricans and the ‘dirty neck syndrome’ of atopic dermatitis.

It is important to recognize this benign and easily confirmed dermatosis in order to prevent unnecessary work-up and treatments.

REFERENCES