

SHINGLES CASE STUDY

C O M P E T I T I O N

RK, a 57 year old housewife presented on the 13th May 1993 with a two day history of painful, well defined rash.

PMH Gall bladder surgery
Appedectomy

Medication Prempak 0,675
Tetramel for Rosacea

SH Non smoker
Non drinker
Systemic Interrogation
All system NAD

Skin:

Patient noticed that on Sunday the 9th May 1993, she felt that her left chest wall was sensitive to the touch – actually painful to the touch. On the 12th May 1993 she noticed a rash appearing. Initially she thought that this was an insect bite, however, when it became quite painful, she decided to consult a doctor.

Examination:

Well
Apyrexial 36 degrees
Ears, Throat and Chest – clear

Systemic: NAD BP 110/70

Skin: Well defined vesicular rash in the T10 zone, very tender to the touch.

Herpes Zoster

Mx: Disease process explained to the patient. The possibility of post herpetic neuralgia discussed. The patient was given the option of taking Zovirax 800mg five times a day or letting the illness run its course. The patient turned down the offer of Zovirax because of the cost factor.

However, that evening she contacted friends who had had shingles and she came to the conclusion that she could not afford not to use Zovirax.

For this reason on Friday morning, I was telephoned for a prescription for Zovirax. As it was important to start treatment as soon as possible I managed to get a representative of Wellcome to deliver the drug. Within half an hour of phoning, Wellcome delivered the Zovirax to me at a very competitive price.

The patient started the treatment (800mg five times daily for seven days) and the vesicles ceased to appear and those that were there began to dry up. Also the sensation of “thorns in her side” eased off and improved dramatically over the next couple of days.

I asked the patient if she thought that taking the Zovirax and spending all that money had been worthwhile. The answer was affirmative as she felt that the drug had done what had been promised it would do.

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