

Bedbugs (Heteroptera, Cimicidae): an etiology of pruritus to be remembered *

Cimidíase (dermatose por percevejo): uma causa de prurigo a ser lembrada

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Abstract: This report describes a 19-year old female patient, who sought medical attention for severe itching of two weeks' duration. Erythematous papules and wheals were found, principally on her upper and lower limbs. Careful anamnesis excluded other etiologies of the pruritus, including those related to internal diseases and medication. Following counseling regarding the need to contract a domestic pest control company, the patient returned to the clinic three weeks later with no skin lesions and bearing a glass jar containing several bedbugs collected following pest control treatment.

Keywords: Bedbugs; Cimicidae; Prurigo

Resumo: Descrevemos uma doente de 19 anos que nos procurou com quadro de intenso prurido há 2 semanas e demonstrando lesões eritemato-pápulo-urticadas mais intensamente distribuídas nos membros superiores e inferiores. A anamnese detalhada excluiu causas internas e medicamentos como uma possível causa do prurigo. Após orientações quanto a dedetização do domicílio a doente retornou no consultório após 3 semanas sem lesões cutâneas e trazendo em um pote de vidro vários percevejos coletados após a dedetização.

Palavras-chave: Cimicidae; Percevejos-de-Cama; Prurigo

CASE REPORT

A 19-year old woman sought medical attention at this clinic complaining of intense itching for two weeks' duration, particularly during the night. The presence of papules and erythematous wheals were

found, principally on her limbs, some of which formed a sequential pattern (Figure 1). This pattern of the lesions resembled bites of sucking insects. Anamnesis excluded the use of any medication, the

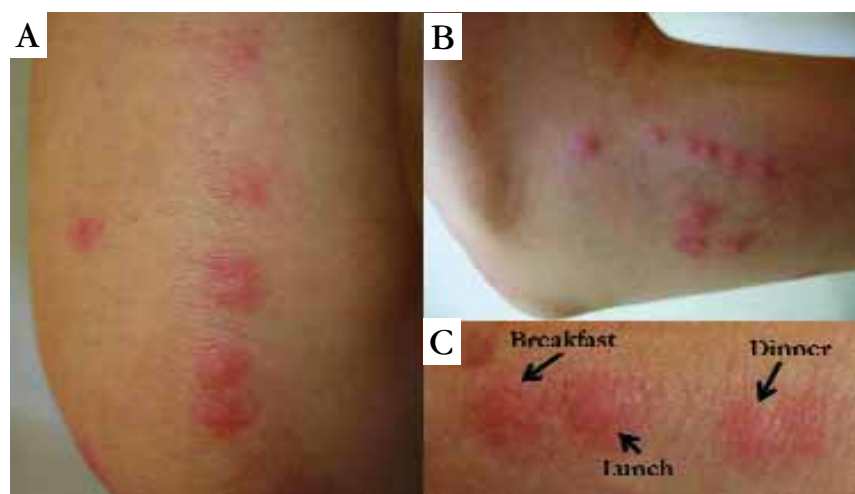


FIGURE 1: A. The presence of wheals in a linear and sequential pattern on the extensor surface of the patient's right forearm. B. Similar lesions on the internal surface of her left forearm. C. Detail of the wheals forming a sequential pattern as a consequence of the sucking habits of the parasite, a trajectory referred to as "breakfast, lunch and dinner"

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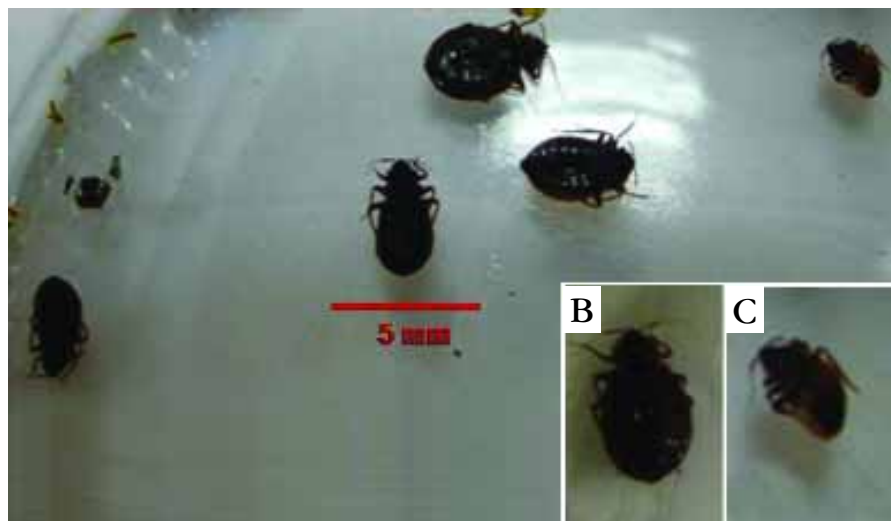


FIGURE 2: A. Various bedbugs at different growth stages brought by the patient to the doctor's office after decontaminating her home by a pest control company. Note that the adult form of the insect generally grows to around 5 mm in size. B. Detail of the ventral surface of the insect and the flattened appearance of its body. C. Dorsal surface of *Cimex lectularius*

presence of comorbidities, the presence of mosquitoes or fleas in the home and the possibility of any other family members being affected. The patient was instructed to contract a pest control company to decontaminate the apartment in which she lived because of a suspicion of Cimicidae. Despite the patient's incredulous reaction to this diagnosis, three weeks later she returned to the clinic, reporting that she had had a pest control company fumigating her

home and that she had recovered numerous insects, some containing blood (Figure 2).

C. lectularius is the principal cause of bites and its presence is widespread.^{1,2} The insect has an ovoid, flattened body, with no wings. It is found in homes and hotels, in wood, mattresses, wallpaper, and in birds' nests.^{1,2} International travel and the resistance to insecticides has contributed to the resurgence of Cimicidae.³ □

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