

# Anemia, exertional dyspnea, and petechial rash in a healthy 62-year-old (

## History of Present Illness

A 62-year-old man with a history of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, tobacco use, cerebral vascular accident, and a remote history of alcohol use, presented with a chief complaint of lightheadedness and increased bruising over one week. Upon review of systems, he also had exertional dyspnea, left upper and lower extremity swelling, and red-colored urine. There was no history of trauma, infection, new medications, or abnormal diet.

## Physical Exam

**Vitals:** BP 88/57 HR 90-110 Afebrile 97-99% on RA

**HEENT:** petechiae on lateral undersides of tongue

**Ext:** Left hand and left lower extremity with non-pitting edema

**Skin:** multiple tender subcutaneous nodules, ecchymosis throughout, extensive ecchymosis on buttocks, petechiae on bilateral lower extremities



**Figure 1.** Ecchymosis on buttocks at presentation (left). Corkscrew hair (right).

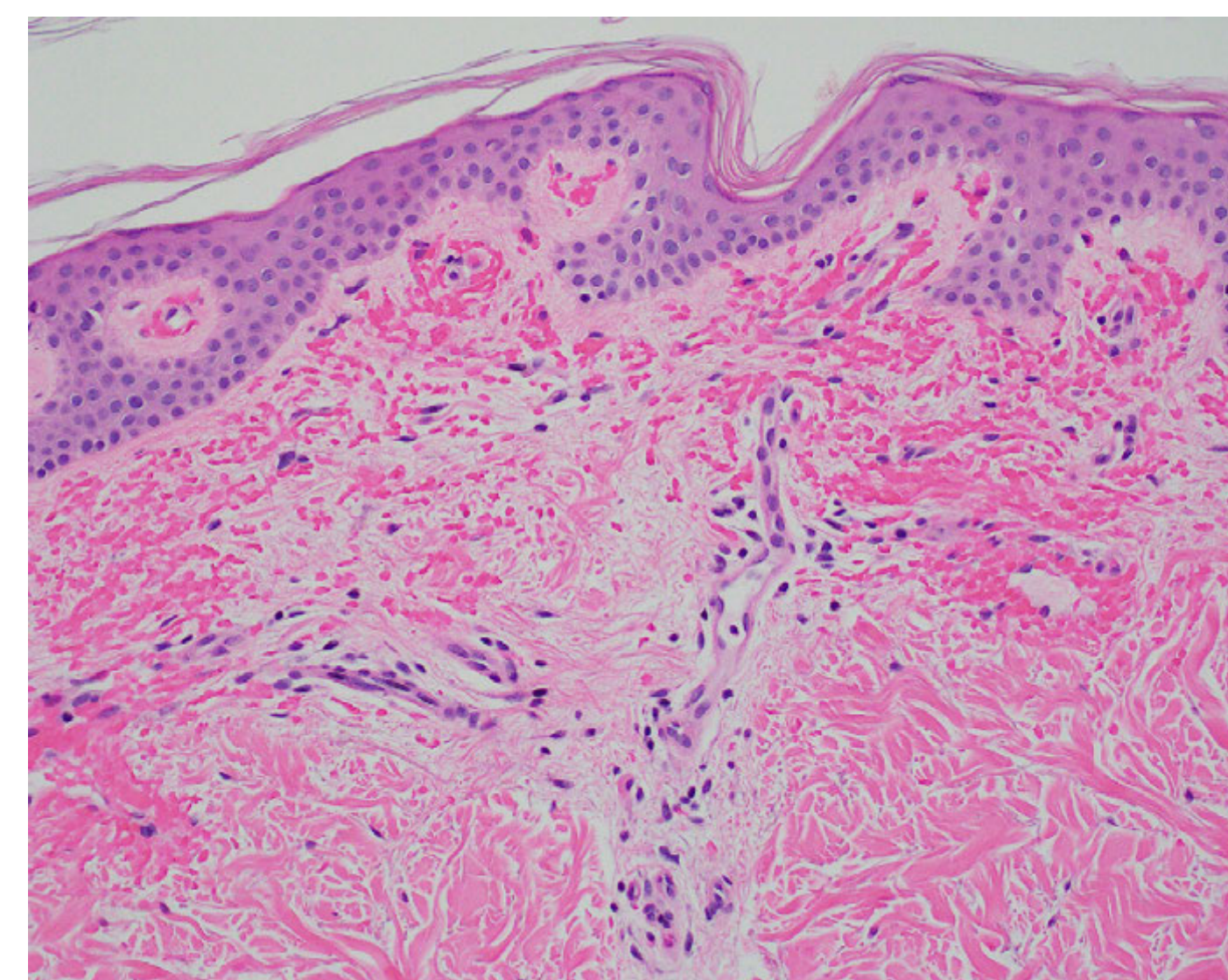


**Figure 2.** Petechiae on bilateral lower extremities.

## Workup

**H/H** 11.2/33 → 7.9/24 on HD4 **Alk Phos** 172 (40-130) &  
**Platelets** 229 (normal) **UA** 30 protein, 14 hyaline casts,  
**ESR** 52 **CRP** 79 1+ blood &  
**PT** 13.6 (10.0-12.9) **Vitamin C** <5 (23-114) &  
**tBili** 2.1 (0.0-1.2) &  
**iBili** 1.3 (0.1-1.0) &

**Figure 3.** Skin biopsy with dermal extravasated erythrocytes without evidence of vasculitis or thrombi.



## Outcome

A diagnosis of scurvy was made. The patient was discharged on 1000mg of vitamin C a day for two weeks, followed by 400mg daily until complete resolution. His lightheadedness, bruising, petechiae, swelling, and anemia were improved at 2 weeks and resolved with 7 weeks of treatment.



**Figure 4.** After 2 weeks (left) and 7 weeks (right) treatment. )

## Conclusions

- One-third of hospitalized patients in high-income countries are either malnourished or at-risk<sup>1</sup>
- Micronutrient deficiency should be considered even in patients without classic risk factors and who report normal diets

## References

I. Sorensen J, Kondrup J, et al. EuroOOPS: an international, multicenter study to implement nutritional risk screening and evaluate clinical outcome. *Clinical nutrition*. 2008; 27(3):340-9.