

Cuterebra spp. Infestation

DEFINITION

A nodular lesion of the skin due to the presence of *Cuterebra* spp. larvae.

ETIOLOGY AND PATHOGENESIS

Adult *Cuterebra* spp. flies are large, resemble a bumble bee, and neither feed nor bite. Females lay their eggs along rabbit runs and near rodent burrows. If a host brushes up against these eggs, they hatch instantaneously and the first-stage larvae crawl into the host's fur. From here they enter the host through natural body openings. Migration occurs to the skin where the third stage becomes clinically noticeable in the subcutaneous tissue. Larvae may also undergo aberrant migrations in the brain, pharynx, nostrils, and eyelids.

CLINICAL FEATURES

Lesions are generally noted in late summer or autumn as 1–2 cm (0.4–0.8 in) nodules located over the head, neck, and trunk. A fistula develops from which the larva eventually escapes.

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES

- Dracunculiasis
- Cutaneous neoplasia
- Bacterial or fungal granuloma
- Deep mycotic infections
- Panniculitis (Inflammation of fat)
- Foreign body granuloma
- Infected wound

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

Opening a fistula reveals the 2.5–4.5 cm (1.0–1.8 in) dark brown to black, heavily-spined larva.

MANAGEMENT

Removal of the larva through the enlarged fistula. If not removed intact, parts of the larva left in the cavity may result in allergic or irritant reactions.

KEY POINT

- A rare dermatosis.

