

Background:

In this era of globalization and widespread immigration, cultural healing customs rarely seen in one's own region are being encountered more frequently. We describe a patient who has a fever and rash treated with coining, initially confusing the nature of a rash.

Case History:

A middle aged Cambodian gentleman presents with a fever and rash. He was not toxic appearing and initially providers were concerned for an unusual rash, described as an erythematous slightly raised target like erythema multiform in nature, but with odd streaks in a "Christmas Tree" pattern. A significant language barrier was also present. He was found to have a viral examtham, with overlying "coining".



Teaching Points:

Coining (cao gio in Vietnamese) is a remedy commonly used in Asian cultures particularly in Vietnam and Cambodia. Usually, oiled skin is vigorously rubbed with the edge of a coin until ecchymosis or bruising results in a "pine tree" pattern. Other objects are sometimes used. Cultural belief is that this improves respiration and promotes increased circulation.

The "Christmas Tree" pattern is often used to describe pityriasis rosea but these lesions are white, scaly oval and follow dermatomes, hence the "Christmas tree" appearance.

This fellow has serapiginous "target lesions" best seen lateral to the dramatic coining ecchymosis.