

CLINICAL IMAGE

Patterned charring along the contact points of a metallic locket due to lightning strike

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Key Clinical Message

Superficial cutaneous burns following lightning strike may vary in patterns ranging from linear burns, punctate burns, feathering burns, and thermal burns. Contact with an extrinsic object in the pathway of lightning current can lead to disastrous consequences. The lucky who survive may show bizarre and interesting burn patterns to tell their story.

Keywords

Imprint burn, lightning injury, locket burn, pattern, survivor, thermal burn.

Lightning injuries most significantly affect the cardiorespiratory, neurological, and the integumentary systems [1]. Superficial or deep thermal contact burns following lightning strike may occur if the victim touches an object that falls in the electrical pathway [2]. We present a rare, previously unreported lightning thermal burn which occurred via contact with a metallic locket.

This 23-year old-farmer suffered a lightning strike which knocked him unconscious for 15 min. His vital parameters and systemic examination showed no abnormality except for anterograde amnesia. He had a patterned charring of the skin around the neck and front of his chest imprinted along the contact points of a metallic locket he was wearing at the time of injury (Fig. 1). ECG, MRI of brain, and EEG were normal. He was uneventfully discharged after 3 days of observation. At discharge, his neurological parameters were normal. However, he was still amnesic to the lightning injury with only the locket burn to tell his story.



Figure 1. Picture showing thermal contact burn due to metallic locket on the neck and chest of the victim.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

References

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