

Dermatologic Manifestations of Underlying Endocrinopathy

Sharon E. Jacob, M.D., Christopher J. Ballard, B.S., & Claudia Vogel, M.D.

Disorder	Cutaneous Manifestations	Systemic Manifestations	Lab Abnormalities
Acromegaly	Acanthosis nigricans; Acrochordons (skin tags); Coarsened face with accentuated creases; Cutis vertices gyrate; Doughy skin; Hyperhidrosis; Hypertrichosis (does not affect beard); Macroglossia; Oily skin; Thick and hard nails	Acral growth; Broad nose; Carpal tunnel syndrome; Colonic polyps; Deep voice; Galactorrhea; Headache; HTN; Hypogonadism; Joint pains, Organomegaly; Pre-pubertal gigantism; Thick lips; Prognathism; Visual Δ; Widened teeth spaces	↑ GH, ↑ IGF-1 ↑ Calcium in urine Oral glucose tolerance test: failure of GH production to ↓
Addison's Disease (Adrenocortical insufficiency)	Auricular calcification; Hair may darken; Hyperpigmentation; Longitudinal pigmented bands in nails; Loss of body hair (especially axillae); Mucosal pigmentation; Pigmented hand creases; Pigmented scars and nevi; Vitiligo	Fatigue ↓ BP; Postural dizziness; Salt craving GI symptoms: Abdominal pain; Anorexia; Constipation; Diarrhea; Nausea; Vomiting Muscle weakness	↑ ACTH, ↑ K ⁺ ↓ Na ⁺ , ↑ Ca ⁺⁺ Metabolic acidosis Anemia Eosinophilia
Cushing's Syndrome	Acanthosis nigricans; Acne; Broad purple striae; "Cigarette paper" wrinkling dorsal hands and elbows (Liddle sign — can peel off with tape); Cutis marmorata; Easy bruising; Hirsutism; Telangiectasia; Thin dermis and epidermis; ↓ Wound healing	Abdominal pain; Amenorrhea; Impotence; Buffalo hump; Central obesity; Exophthalmos; Facial plethora; HTN; Psychological changes; Moon facies; Short stature from kyphosis and osteoporosis; Weakness	Urinary Free Cortisol > 3x normal, loss of normal diurnal rhythm in ACTH and Cortisol secretion. Failure of Cortisol to ↓ after Dexamethasone suppression test. Glucose intolerance ↑ Calcium in urine, ↑ renal stones
Cushing's Disease (Pituitary excess of ACTH)	Acne Hirsutism Hyperpigmentation	As above; Tumor mass effect: visual field loss & headache	↑ ACTH, ↓ K ⁺ , ↑ Free Cortisol Urinary free Cortisol suppression after high-dose Dexamethasone (Differentiate from ectopic ACTH secretion: no cortisol suppression after high dose Dexamethasone)
Diabetes Mellitus Type 1: Autoimmune, lack of insulin secretion Type 2: Insulin resistance Obesity Normal insulin	Acanthosis nigricans; Bullous diabetorum; Diabetic Dermopathy (pretibial pigmented patches); Foot Ulcers; Frequent fungal infections, especially Candida; Furuncles; Nail bed telangiectasia; Necrobiosis lipoidica diabetorum; Pedal petechial purpura; Rubeosis faciei; Scleredema adultorum; Tight, thick, waxy skin; Vitiligo; Xanthomas; Yellow skin and nails	Polydipsia; polyuria; polyphagia; Retinopathy; Nephropathy; neuropathy: foot drop; postural hypotension; resting tachycardia; gastroparesis; erectile dysfunction; Charcot's arthropathy; cardiovascular disease; candidiasis and unusual infections.	FPG ≥ 126 mg/dl RPG ≥ 200 mg/dl Glucose in urine if glucose level >180 mg/dl Abnormal A1C, abnormal lipids, hypertriglyceridemia, microalbuminuria.
Graves' Disease (Hyperthyroidism)	Acropachy (distal clubbing, swelling and periosteal thickening); Diffuse alopecia; Palmar erythema; Plummer's nail — onycholysis; Skin: moist (↑ sweating) & warm (↑ cutaneous blood flow); Vitiligo	Anxiety; Diarrhea; Goiter; Heat intolerance; Insomnia; Ophthalmopathy; Pretibial myxedema; Tachycardia; Tremor; Weight loss	↑ Free T4, ↓ TSH, ↑ FTI, ↑ T3 Positive thyroid antibodies
Hashimoto's Thyroiditis	↓ Body Hair; Dry, brittle, coarse, and slow growing hair; Fine wrinkling; Loss of outer 1/3 of eyebrow (madarosis); Malar flush; Myxedema (mucopolysaccharides) in hands and periorbital; Nails: brittle, slow growing; Patchy and diffuse hair loss; Thin, cold, pale, dry skin	If Hypothyroid: Bradycardia; Cold intolerance; Constipation; Cretinism (in children): severe mental retardation, impaired growth; Menstrual irregularities; Protuberant abdomen; Somnolence; Weight gain, goiter, thyroid antibodies	↓ Free T4, ↓ Total T4, ↑ TSH, ↑ Serum cholesterol + TPO AB

Disorder	Cutaneous Manifestations	Systemic Manifestations	Lab Abnormalities
Hyperparathyroidism	Deposition of Calcium Pruritus	Nephrocalcinosis; Osteitis fibrosa cystica; Renal calculi	1°: ↑ PTH, ↑ Ca ⁺² in serum and urine, ↓ serum Phosphorus, ↑ urinary Phosphorus 2°: ↑ PTH, ↓ serum Ca ⁺² , ↑ serum Phosphorus
Hypoparathyroidism	Hair: coarse, sparse Nails: opaque and brittle with transverse ridges Skin: dry, hyperkeratotic, scaly, and puffy	Altered dentition: defective enamel/ dental hypoplasia; Chvostek's sign — contraction of muscle by tapping along facial nerve (sign of tetany)	↓ PTH, ↓ Ca ⁺² , ↑ Phosphorus EKG Changes: prolonged Q-T intervals and T-wave changes
Hypopituitarism	Loss of body hair; Pale skin (mucous membranes normal color); Scalp hair is fine, dry, & thin; ↓ Sebaceous secretions and sweating; Thin skin → fine wrinkling around eyes and mouth	Amenorrhea; Impotence; Infertility; If pituitary tumor: headaches and visual changes (diplopia, reading problems, field loss); Lack of energy	↓ ACTH, ↓ Cortisol, ↓ LH and FSH ↓ TSH, ↓ GH, ↓ IGF-1 ↑ Prolactin → galactorrhea Symptoms will change depending on the hormonal deficiency
McCune-Albright Syndrome	Large irregular Coast of Maine-like Café-au-lait macules (CALM)	Hyperthyroidism; Polyostotic fibrous dysplasia; Precocious puberty	GNAS1 gene mutation; ↑ GH from pituitary adenomas ↑ Serum Alkaline Phosphatase ↑ Urinary Hydroxyproline
MEN I (Wermer Syndrome) Autosomal Dominant	Facial angiofibromas; Collagenomas, Confetti macules; CALM; Lipomas	Tumors or hyperplasia of: Pituitary; Parathyroid & Pancreas Gastrinoma → Z-E Syndrome Papillary CA Thyroid	MEN1 gene 11q13 (defect menin) ↑ Calcium, ↑ PTH ↑ Prolactin → amenorrhea, galactorrhea ↑ GH → acromegaly ↑ ACTH → Cushing's syndrome
MEN IIa (Sipple Syndrome) Autosomal Dominant	Lichen/ Macular amyloidosis interscapular	Parathyroid (hyperplasia or tumor) Pheochromocytoma Thyroid: Medullary CA	10q11.2 RET (point mutation) ↑ Calcitonin, ↑ PTH, ↑ Ca ⁺²
MEN IIb (III) (Wagenmann-Froebose) Autosomal Dominant	Inverted lids (from thick corneal nerve); Marfanoid habitus; Multiple mucosal neuromas or ganglioneuromas, CALM	Pheochromocytoma Thyroid: Medullary CA	10q11.2 RET (missense mutation) ↑ Calcitonin, ↑ Catecholamines, VMA, and Metanephrines
Pheochromocytoma	Flushing of face and forehead; Redness and cyanosis of the hands; ↑ Sweating	↑ BP (10% malignant); Headaches; Palpitations; Sympathetic Crisis; Tremor	↑ Catecholamines, VMA, and Metanephrines
Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome	Acanthosis Nigricans; Acne; Androgenic alopecia; Hirsutism; Nipple, perineum, axillae hyperpigmentation; Thickened and coarse pubic & axillary hair children	Amenorrhea (or oligo-menorrhea) Obesity Precocious puberty Short stature Polyeystic ovaries	↑ LH, ↓ FSH ↑ Testosterone (Androgens) ↑ DHEA, hyperinsulinemia

Abbreviations:

Δ = change; ACTH: Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone; BP: Blood Pressure; CA: Carcinoma; Ca⁺²: Calcium; CALM: Café-au-lait macules; DHEA: Dehydroepiandrosterone; EKG: Electrocardiogram; FPG: Fasting Plasma Glucose; FSH: Follicle-Stimulating Hormone; FTI: Free Thyroxine Index; GH: Growth Hormone; GI: Gastrointestinal; HbA1c: Hemoglobin A1c; HTN: Hypertension; IGF-1: Insulin-like Growth Factor-1; K⁺: Potassium; LH: Luteinizing Hormone; MEN: Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia; Na⁺: Sodium; PTH: Parathyroid Hormone; RPPG: Random Plasma Glucose; TPO AB: Thyroperoxidase Antibodies; TSH: Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone; VMA: Vanillylmandelic Acid; Z-E: Zollinger-Ellison

References

- Jabbour SA. Cutaneous manifestations of endocrine disorders. Am J Clin Dermatol. 2003; 4(5): 315-331.
- Bolognia JL, Jorizzo JL, Rapini RP. Dermatology. New York: Elsevier Limited, 2003.
- Braunwald E, Fauci AS, Kasper DL et al., eds. Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine, 15th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001.
- Cecil RL, Goldman L (ed), Bennett JC (ed). Cecil Textbook of Medicine, 21st ed. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 2000.
- Freedberg IM, et al., eds. Fitzpatrick's Dermatology in General Medicine, 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999.
- Francis S. Greenspan, David Gardner. Basic & Clinical Endocrinology, Sixth edition; San Francisco: Lange Medical books/McGraw-Hill, 2001



Sharon E. Jacob, M.D., is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Dermatology, Director of the Contact Dermatitis Clinic and Medical Student Education, Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery, University of Miami, School of Medicine, Miami, Fla.