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A toddler with a yellow nose and excessive intake of sweet potato

Mohamed Eltayeb

Paediatric Department, Letterkenny General Hospital, Letterkenny, Ireland

Correspondence to Dr Mohamed Eltayeb, meltayeb12@yahoo.com

DESCRIPTION

A 30-month-old boy presented with yellowish discolouration of the nose (figure 1), for 4 months. He was born prematurely at 32 weeks gestation with atrial and ventricular septal defects; both repaired in March 2009. Also has asthma and gastro-oesophageal reflux. He is on erythromycin 16 mg four times a day, omeprazole 5 mg once daily, flexitide 50 2 puffs twice daily, pharmlon 7.5 mls once daily and fortini milk 500 mls a day. On examination, he looks well, sclera is white and the soles of the feet were slightly yellow. He eats a regular diet of sweet potato 75 mg once or twice daily as estimated by dietician. This contains at least 3000–6000 IU of β carotene depending on the colour of sweet potato. The Fortini milk and squash also contains β carotene but to a lesser extent. Blood investigations revealed high serum β carotene levels and slightly raised aspartate aminotransferase (AST) and alanine transaminase (ALT) levels but blood sugar, rest of

liver function test, vitamin A level and thyroid function test were normal. The mother received dietary advice to avoid excessive intake of carotene. Whether the slightly raised AST and ALT is related to the high β carotemia or his medication is not known but the liver function test will be repeated after resolution of β carotenemia. β carotenemia is a benign condition which presents with yellow discolouration of the skin due to increased intake of β carotene.¹

Acknowledgements The author would like to thank Sharon Patton Paediatric dietician for her help regarding this patient.

Competing interests None.

Patient consent Obtained.

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1. Anjay MA, Palanivel V, Nirmal S. An infant with yellow skin. *Arch Dis Child* 2008;**93**:553.

Figure 1 Yellow discolouration of nose.

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Please cite this article as follows (you will need to access the article online to obtain the date of publication).

Eltayeb M. A toddler with a yellow nose and excessive intake of sweet potato.
BMJ Case Reports 2011;10.1136/bcr.10.2011.4951, Published XXX

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