CLINICAL SNAPSHOT

Rumpel-Leede Sign After Coronary Angiography

A 69-year-old man with hypertension but without diabetes mellitus presented for follow-up coronary angiography nine months after an intervention on the left main stem artery. After the procedure, which had been performed by way of the left radial artery, partial deblocking of the transradial band distal to the site of compression was followed by the appearance of petechiae in an area of previously normal skin. Petechiae distal to venous obstruction were first described by Theodor Rumpel (1909) and Carl Stockbridge Leede (1911) in patients with scarlet fever. The petechiae are due to the acute rupture of dermal capillaries. This rare, benign phenomenon is considered a sign of diminished capillary resistance and is associated with vasculopathy, thrombocytopathy, or thrombocytopenia. Longstanding diabetes mellitus and arterial hypertension are predisposing factors. In our illustrative case, the Rumpel-Leede sign arose in a hypertensive patient most likely because of platelet dysfunction under treatment with aspirin and clopidogrel after stent implantation. The petechial hemorrhages regressed within two days without any specific treatment and were no longer visible on further outpatient follow-up.

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