CLINICAL SNAPSHOT

The Consequences of a “Harmless” Frontal Swelling

- a) The affected area after incomplete incisional biopsy in another institution.
- b) The same site after four further procedures for the resection of dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans of the frontal region, with secondary granulation.

A 31-year-old man without antecedent illnesses and in good general condition was referred because of a painless, but growing and cosmetically disturbing swelling on the forehead, which he had first noticed some 9 months previously. It had reached the size of ca. 2 × 1 cm before subtotal excisional biopsy in another institution. The histopathological examination revealed a dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans of the facial skin; multiple further surgical procedures were needed before an R0 resection could be achieved. The resulting cutaneous defect was as large as the palm of a hand. Because of its size, the defect was allowed to heal by secondary intention in combination with a meshed split-thickness skin graft, yielding an adequate cosmetic result. This case underscores the importance of a differential diagnostic work-up even for seemingly harmless cosmetic flaws.

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