

## IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Stephanie V. Sherman, M.D., *Editor*

## Primary Cutaneous Herpes Simplex Virus Infection of the Cheek



A 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL PRESENTED TO THE DERMATOLOGY DEPARTMENT with a 7-day history of a lesion on the left cheek and a 4-day history of fever. Four days before presentation, treatment for possible impetigo had been initiated, but the symptoms had not abated. On physical examination, a round plaque 3 cm in diameter on an erythematous base was observed on the patient's left cheek, with overlying crusting and a single intact vesicle. Satellite vesicles (arrows) and ipsilateral cervical lymphadenopathy were also present. There were no mucosal lesions. The patient's father, who had accompanied her to the appointment, was noted to have crusting of the lower lip that had started 10 days earlier, a symptom consistent with healing herpes labialis. A polymerase-chain-reaction assay of an unroofed vesicle on the patient's cheek was positive for herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1). A diagnosis of primary cutaneous HSV-1 infection was made. HSV-1 spreads through direct contact with herpetic lesions or infected mucosal secretions. In this case, there was no concern for sexual abuse. When HSV-1 infection manifests in children as cutaneous lesions without mucosal involvement, it may be confused with the honey-crusted appearance of impetigo. Treatment with oral acyclovir was given, and the lesion abated without scarring.

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