



Evaluation of Itch Without Obvious Cause

History

Periodicity: Day or night, intermittent or continuous

Nature: Burning, pricking, insects crawling

Location: Scapula/subscapula in nostalgia paresthetica (a localized itch in the scapular area, presumably neuropathic); palms of hand and soles of feet (cholestasis)

Provoking factors: Activity/exercise, cold, sunlight, water

Medications: Opioids, hypersensitivity reactions

Other: Atopic history; travel history; parasitic infections

Examination

Dry skin (thyroid disease)

Scabies

Icteric conjunctiva (cholestasis)

Weight loss (cholestasis, renal disease, lymphoma)

Change in mental status (cholestasis, renal disease)

Laboratory

Complete blood count: If anemic, plasma iron, total iron-binding capacity, ferritin

Erythrocyte sedimentation rate

Plasma creatinine

Total/direct bilirubin, alkaline phosphatase, gamma glutamyl transpeptidase, aspartate aminotransferase, alanine aminotransferase, fasting total plasma bile acids

Thyroid function: T4 and thyroid-stimulating hormone

Fasting plasma glucose

Fecal analysis for ova and parasites

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