



# Can you read the alphabet of secondary syphilis?

*Sekonder sifilizin alfabesini okuyabiliyor musunuz?*

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**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sekonder sifiliz, certificate de verol, korona veneris, kondiloma lata, plak müköz, anjina sifilitika zive spesifika

## To The Editor,

A 44-year-old male patient presented with multiple, itchy, lichenoid patches, papules and plaques on the tongue, face, trunk, upper and lower extremities, perianal area and penis, some of which were erosive for 3 months. Although he had a sore throat and voice annoyance, there was no fever, headache, and arthralgia. The dermatologic examination revealed that some lesions had special sequencing and the presence of thrombosed-dilated vessels on the erosive papules on the trunk drew attention. It was considered that the lesions are compatible with "corona veneris" in the frontal area, "certifiat d'verol" at the edge of the nostrils, "plaque mucous" in the oral mucosa (respectively Figure 1 a,b,c), "syphilis papulosa lenticularis" in the trunk and limbs (Figure 2), "papule erosive (condyloma lata)" in the anogenital region (Figure 3) and pharyngitis picture was associated with "angina syphilitica sive specifica" (Figure 1c). No lesions were observed on the palms and soles. Submandibular and inguinal lymphadenopathies were detected. The "Venereal Disease Research Lab" and "Treponema Pallidum Hemagglutination Assay" tests were positive, with a titer of 1:128 and 1:2560 respectively. Serologic test for infection

with the human immunodeficiency virus was negative. The patient administered penicillin G benzathine with the diagnosis of secondary syphilis improved within 2 weeks. Secondary syphilis, known as the great imitator, is characterized by skin rashes<sup>1</sup>. Though a wide variety of clinical findings can be seen with the bacteremia of *T. Pallidum*, the



**Figure 1.** a) Corona veneris, b) certifiat d'verol, c) plaque mucous

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**Figure 2.** Syphilis papulosa lenticularis(sides), thrombosed-dilated vessels on the erosive papules (middle)

causative agent of syphilis, there is an alphabet that dermatologists can read in secondary syphilis as in other dermatologic diseases<sup>2</sup>. It is very important to recognize clues such as the distribution of lesions, location of involvement, shape and color. The different naming of papules according to involvement areas increases awareness for diagnosing. Informed consent was obtained from the patient.

#### Ethics

**Informed Consent:** Informed consent was obtained from the patient.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

#### Authorship Contributions

Surgical and Medical Practices: E.Y.E., G.V., Concept: Ç.T., H.M.E., Design: Ç.T., H.M.E., Data Collection or Processing: Ç.T., Analysis or Interpretation: Ç.T., H.M.E., Literature Search: Ç.T., E.Y.E., G.V., Writing: Ç.T.



**Figure 3.** Papule erosive (condylomata lata)

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