Approach to a Generalized Rash!
....Clues to Underlying Diseases

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Get the History

• Timing
• Distribution
  – Where did it start?
  – Where has it spread?
  – Does it move (evanescent) or not (fixed)?
• Symptoms – Itching, Pain, Swelling
• New medications?
• Other people affected?
Systemic Associations?
Sick or Not?

- Fever?
- Signs of shock
  - Hypotension, poor perfusion, decreased consciousness
- Irritability
- Headache
- Respiratory symptoms
- Eye changes
- Mucous membrane lesions or pain
- Joint pain or swelling
What is the primary lesion?

Can you feel it?

- No
  - How big is it?
    - < 1 cm
      - Macule
    - > 1 cm
      - Patch
  - > 1 cm
    - Papule/Nodule
    - Plaque

- Yes
  - How big is it?
    - < 1 cm
      - Papule/Nodule
    - > 1 cm
      - Plaque
Amount of Skin Involved/Lesion

Macules/Papules
- Bites
- Folliculitis
- Psoriasis
- Eczema
- Herpes
- Scabies
- Urticaria
- Vasculitis

Patches/Plaques
- Eczema
- Psoriasis
- Urticaria
- Tinea
- Seborrheic dermatitis
- Syphilis
- Drug eruptions
- Cutaneous lupus
- Sarcoidosis

Erythroderma
- Drug eruption***
- Eczematous dermatitis
- Psoriasis
- Cutaneous T cell
- Lymphoma
What is the primary lesion?  
Any secondary findings?

Something in Papule?  
- Pus  
  - Pustule  
    - Culture  
  - Vesicle  
    - Friction  
- Clear fluid
Pustules!

• Culture, culture, culture
  – Wipe with alcohol, unroof, swab

• Also with honey colored crust
Other secondary changes?

Changes?

- Excoriation
  - Underlying pruritus?
  - Bug, drug, (malignancy)

- Scarring

- Erosions/Ulcerations

- Scale/Crust
  - Vesicles?
  - Papulosquamous
Pruritic Disorders

- Insect bites
- Scabies
- Urticaria
- Eczema (contact, nummular, atopic)
- Varicella
- Drug

- Folliculitis
- Psoriasis
- Pityriasis rosea
- Tinea
- Viral exanthem
Danger Signs!!!

• Fever
• Skin pain with desquamation
• PURPLE or dusky color
• Mucosal changes
• Significant swelling
• Rapid progression
• Lots of blisters

• Concerning systemic symptoms....
References
