

Sudden unexpected death due to Fournier gangrene

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Abstract

Fournier gangrene is a rare fulminant necrotizing infection of the skin and soft tissue of the perineum that may result in rapid death. We describe the autopsy case of a 70-year-old female with uncontrolled diabetes mellitus who was found unexpectedly dead in her house where she lived with her dog. Examination of the body revealed a deep necrotic ulceration of the perineum with exposure of the underlying deep muscles that was initially misinterpreted by police officers as post mortem animal predation. Medicolegal examination and histological and microbiological analyses eliminated this hypothesis and the diagnosis of septic multiorgan failure due to necrotizing fasciitis was retained as a cause of death.

Keywords: Autopsy; Forensic pathology; Fournier gangrene; Sudden death.

