

## Human Orf Infection (Ecthyma Contagiosum) After Feast of Sacrifice

H. Daflaoui<sup>1\*</sup>, A. Khouna<sup>1</sup>, H. Aburabie<sup>1</sup>, S. Dikhaya<sup>1,2</sup>, and N. Zizi<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Dermatology, Mohammed VI University Hospital of Oujda, Medical School of Oujda, Mohammed First University of Oujda, Morocco

<sup>2</sup>Department of Epidemiology, Clinical Research and Public Health Laboratory, Medical School of Oujda, Mohammed First University of Oujda, Morocco

**\*Corresponding author:** Daflaoui H, Department of Dermatology, Mohammed VI University Hospital of Oujda, Medical School of Oujda, Mohammed First University of Oujda, Morocco; Tel: +212636375246; E-mail: [dr.hanane.daf@gmail.com](mailto:dr.hanane.daf@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

*Ecthyma contagiosum is a minor zoonosis, caused by the orf virus that belongs to the family Poxviridae, of the genus Parapoxvirus. Its endemic in sheeps and goats' herds. Transmission to humans occurs through direct contact with infected animals. We report a case of an orf infection in a 32 years old Moroccan woman. It's a benign viral infection, spontaneously regressive and does not require any specific treatment beyond complications that remain rare. Education of people at risk is crucial to prevent Orf virus infection.*

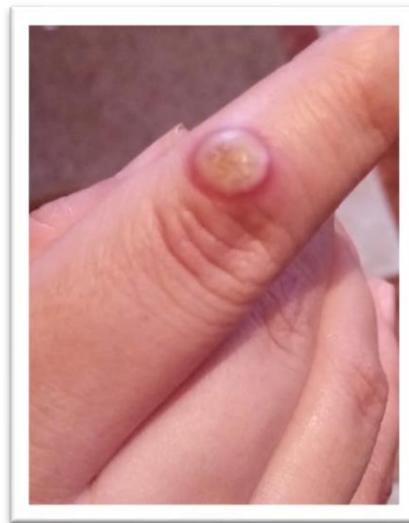
**Keywords:** Orf; Ecthyma contagiosum; Zoonosis; Feast of sacrifice.

Ecthyma contagiosum is a minor zoonosis, caused by the orf virus that belongs to the family Poxviridae, of the genus Parapoxvirus [1]. Its endemic in sheeps and goats' herds. Transmission to humans occurs through direct contact with infected animals. We report a case of an orf infection in a 32 years old Moroccan woman. She has no medical history and consulted for a skin lesion on her right hand. Approximately two weeks before presentation, she had pierced her right hand with a knife while skinning a sheep for the muslim holiday feast of sacrifice [2]. She was not wearing gloves. Clinical examination found a nodular red lesion, with an inflammatory border, slightly indurated base and clean surface, about 1.5 cm in diameter, overlying the dorsal surface of the right index finger. It's moderately painful and not pruriginous. Without any other skin, extra-skin lesions and no palpable lymphadenopathy (Fig. 1).

The diagnosis of Orf disease was retained, no further investigations was done. The patient was under local care in order to prevent any secondary infection, and she presented a good evolution with a total disappearance of the lesion in 2

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weeks. Human Orf or Ecthyma contagiosum is not an endemic disease. Its true incidence and prevalence are not well known. Groups with an increased exposure to animals, such as veterinarians, butchers, and farmers, have been considered to be at highest risk for Orf virus infection. In the same way, it may cause epidemics after the muslim feast of sacrifice. The disease generally manifests after an incubation period of 2 to 6 days, as an erythematous papule, then a nodule with a red center and surrounded by a red halo, which defines the target stage [3]. The diagnosis is mainly based on the history of contact with an animal and the clinical appearance of the lesion. Its main localization is in fingers, hands or forearms. Its classically going through 6 stages, with an evolution that takes 6 to 8 weeks. In immunodeficient patients, the nodular lesion may be extensive, tumoral-like or superinfected. Cases of associated erythema nodosum and erythema multiform were reported [4], [5]. In conclusion, Orf disease is a benign viral infection, spontaneously regressive. It's does not require any specific treatment beyond complications that remain rare. Education of people at risk is crucial to prevent Orf virus infection.



**Fig. 1.** Clinical image of an Orf nodule in the right hand.

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