

A Red, Swollen Finger



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A 75-year-old man with atrial fibrillation taking amiodarone and apixaban, heart failure with an ejection fraction of 20%, and long QT interval presented for evaluation of progressive swelling and erythema of the right fifth finger over 5 months. He had no known trauma to the hand or unusual exposures. He owned a cat and enjoyed the outdoors. On examination, he had a small nodular papule on the right fifth digit with surrounding fusiform swelling and erythema (Figure 1). The left hand was unaffected. He underwent magnetic resonance imaging of the right hand and forearm, which revealed a complex fluid collection in the extensor compartment. Aspiration of the digit was obtained, which revealed approximately 87,000 total nucleated cells with 85% neutrophils, concerning for infectious tenosynovitis. Given the chronicity of his presentation and the lack of

acute systemic toxicity, indolent processes (primarily fungal, mycobacterial, or *Nocardia* spp.) were on the differential. The patient underwent surgical debridement. Operative culture revealed yeast forms with rare cigar bodies, which were eventually identified as *Sporothrix schenckii* (Figures 2 and 3).

Sporotrichosis is an endemic mycosis caused by the eponymous dimorphic fungus. Traditionally, it has been associated with inoculation through small breaks in the skin, garnering the name “rose gardener’s disease.”¹ Culture is the criterion standard for diagnosis, and often several months of treatment with itraconazole² or terbinafine are required to eradicate the infection. This patient was treated with terbinafine because of interactions with itraconazole and apixaban³ as well as the negative inotropic effects and QT-prolonging properties of itraconazole.⁴

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FIGURE 1. Physical examination of the right hand revealed erythema, fusiform swelling of the fifth digit, and a small papule.



FIGURE 2. Cigar bodies in yeast culture, suggestive of *Sporothrix* spp.

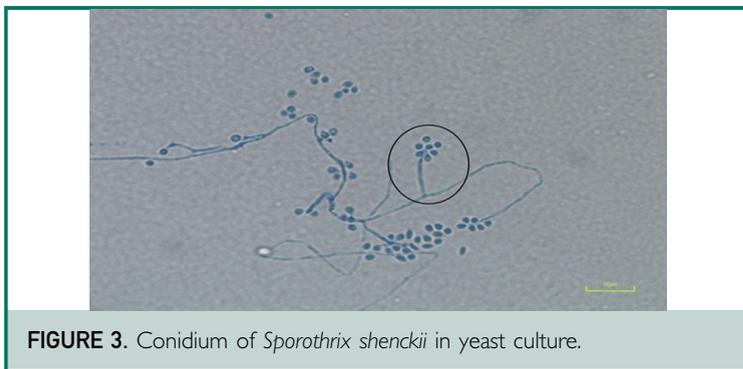


FIGURE 3. Conidium of *Sporothrix shenckii* in yeast culture.

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