CASE REPORT

A previously healthy 50-year-old woman presented with a swollen, erythematous and very tender right thigh. She also noticed small and painful erythematous noduli on her left anterior shin and on both upper arms. She had symptoms of general malaise, loss of appetite, weight loss, fatigue, fever and night sweats. On examination the patient appeared ill and pale, with a temperature of 38.8°C. The small nodular lesions had the appearance of an erythema nodosum and on her right thigh large subcutaneous noduli were present (figure 1). During hospitalisation the eruption on the right thigh resolved spontaneously and similar lesions appeared on the left thigh (figure 2). Laboratory examination revealed a markedly elevated erythrocyte sedimentation rate, anaemia, low albumin and liver enzyme abnormalities.

WHAT IS YOUR DIAGNOSIS?

See page 303 for the answer to this photo quiz.

Figure 1
Swollen and erythematous right thigh at the moment of first presentation

Figure 2
Swollen and erythematous left thigh six weeks later while in the meantime the swelling of the right thigh has disappeared