

Oblivion at the kitchen table

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CASE REPORT

A 44-year-old man presented at the emergency department with cutaneous eruptions. He was a former drug addict treated for hepatitis C infection in a clinical trial with interferon-alpha and ribavirine. He admitted having taken methadone the day before admission, but he was unable to tell us what had happened after ingestion. He woke up at the kitchen table some time during the night and went to bed. A few hours later he woke up again feeling very ill and noticing he was unable to walk. In the emergency department we saw a very ill man with extensive cutaneous eruptions: bullae, erythema and ulcerations with oedema on his right eyebrow, nose, right elbow and right arm and in the groins on both sides. His feet were swollen and large bullae were present on the dorsum of both feet as well as at the ankles (photographs). He was not febrile at admission but developed fever within hours. Laboratory results revealed a C reactive protein of 39 mg/l, leucocytes $9.2 \times 10^9/l$, creatinine of $162 \mu\text{mol/l}$ and a metabolic acidosis. The urine dipstick was positive for red blood cells but none were seen in the sediment.

WHAT IS YOUR DIAGNOSIS?

See page 182 for the answer to the photo quiz.

Photographs are shown with permission of the patient.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7