Calcified nodules of the heel have been reported in high-risk neonates following multiple needle sticks to draw blood. Previous reports suggest that the needle stick trauma causes dystrophic calcification. A case of multiple discrete firm heel lesions, which began shortly after birth in an immature-birth weight neonate who had sustained multiple needle sticks of the heel, is presented. Histologically, these lesions demonstrated foci of calcification and fragments of keratin surrounded by an epithelial lining, suggesting that calcified nodules may also arise from epidermal implantation cysts that secondarily calcify. (J Am Podiatr Med Assoc 92(2): 112-113, 2002)

Discussion

While Sell et al. postulated that these nodules may represent calcified epidermal implantation cysts, they ruled this out because of the absence of an epidermal lining in the specimens they examined. Subsequently, heel nodules resulting from the trauma of needle sticks have been classified as dystrophic calcinosis. The cases described by Sell et al. may very well represent primary dystrophic calcification. However, in the authors’ opinion, the finding of multiple epithelial linings surrounding aggregates of calcification with foci of keratin demonstrates that these calcified nodules can arise from epidermal implantation cysts that secondarily calcify.
References