

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Brain teaser

# Nail discolouration

A 33 year old man presented with punctate and transverse discolouration of the finger nails.



### Question 1

What is the diagnosis?

### Question 2

What is the significance of this nail discolouration?

### Question 3

What conditions are associated with the symptom?

Jerzy K Pawlak

## Answer to last month's brain teaser



Dysplastic naevus syndrome in association with melanoma is a trait inherited in autosomal dominant fashion, with an ill defined pattern of molecular changes.

### Answer 3

The cause of itching in melanoma is unknown, but is a classic indication of malignant change in a pre-existing pigmented lesion.

### Answer 4

The pre-existing dysplastic naevus, the itching and the area of deep pigmentation are all indications for excisional biopsy with a margin of at least 1 cm, which may in itself be a curative excision depending on the Breslow thickness if this is less than 1.5 mm. A deeper lesion will require wider re-excision. In follow up, first degree relatives should be reviewed and the patient should have annual skin checks. Photographs should be taken to monitor other lesions.

### Answer 1

The likely diagnosis is melanotic change in a dysplastic naevus as part of a syndrome characterised by flat variably pigmented macules occurring all over the body but concentrated on the trunk. There is usually a strong family history of naevi and sometimes an additional family history of melanoma, often occurring at an early age.

### Answer 2

**The winner of the November Brain teaser is Dr C Aarons, Bondi Junction, NSW**

Send your answers to arrive by 5 March. A voucher for medical books or medical equipment to the value of \$100 will be awarded for the first correct entry drawn. The winner will be notified by mail and the answer published in the March 2003 issue.

Address entries to:  
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