

IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Blue Hives



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A 77-YEAR-OLD WOMAN UNDERWENT SURGICAL RESECTION OF A 1.5-CM papillary carcinoma of the right breast. Isosulfan blue dye (8 ml) was used intraoperatively to define the associated lymphatic drainage. Three sentinel nodes were excised from her axilla 5 minutes later, followed by the lumpectomy. By the time of wound closure, blue hives had developed on both upper arms and the chest as a result of an allergic reaction to the dye. Her cardiorespiratory system remained stable. She was treated with intravenous phenylephrine (50 mg), had an uneventful recovery, and was discharged home 4 hours later. Blue hives occur in up to 1.5% of patients injected with this dye; the cause is probably a type I, IgE-mediated hypersensitivity to the dye.

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