Snapshot

Black bones: minocycline-induced bone pigmentation

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An 82-year-old man with bilateral knee osteoarthritis underwent consecutive total knee arthroplasty 5 months apart. During both procedures, he was noted to have black subchondral bone with otherwise normal architecture and normal-coloured cancellous bone. At the time of surgery, bone specimens sent for pathology testing were histologically normal. The patient had been treated with minocycline for rosacea for 7 months before the first procedure. Minocycline is an uncommon cause of skeletal pigmentation and is not known to affect bone quality.[1] Discolouration may also be owing to ochronosis, metal deposits, sequestrum and metastatic disease.[2]

1 Eisen D, Hakim MD. Minocycline-induced pigmentation. Incidence, prevention and management. *Drug Saf* 1998; 18: 431-440.

2 McCleskey PE, Littleton KH. Minocycline-induced blue-green discoloration of bone. A case report. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 2004; 86: 146-148. ❑