

PHYTOPHOTODERMATITIS DUE TO FICUS CARICA

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ABSTRACT

A case of phytophotodermatitis due to contact with *Ficus carica* in a 35-year-old man is reported. An erythematous vesiculo-bullous eruption occurred every summer following the contact with this plant since 25 years ago. The photostimulated open tests with the leaf and fruit were positive, whereas the patch tests were negative.

Phytophotodermatitis possibly of allergic origin caused by a contact with *Ficus carica* is relatively frequent in Southern Italy and other Mediterranean areas where this plant is largely cultivated. It seems that this condition remains often misdiagnosed.

KEY WORDS

phytophotodermatitis, *ficus carica*, positive photopatch test.

INTRODUCTION

Ficus carica is a plant of the Moraceae family widely diffused in Southern Italy.

It is well known that *Ficus carica* can induce both irritant and allergic contact dermatitis, mainly with a photomediated mechanism (1):

CASE REPORT

A 35-year-old man was first referred to us during July 1993 for an erythematous, vesicular and bullous eruption located at the dorsal aspect of his forearms, hands, legs and feet (fig. 1, 2). The lesions were itching and painful.

