Aerobic and anaerobic microbiology of axillary hidradenitis suppurativa

I. Brook and E. H. Frazier
Department of Pediatrics, Navy Hospital, Bethesda, MD, USA.

A retrospective review of the microbiological and clinical data of 17 specimens obtained from axillary hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) over a period of 6 years was undertaken to study the aerobic and anaerobic microbiology of this condition. A total of 42 bacterial isolates (2.5 per specimen) were obtained, 12 aerobic or facultative (0.7 per specimen) and 30 anaerobic or micro-aerophilic (1.8 per specimen). Aerobic and facultative bacteria only were isolated in six (35%) cases, anaerobic bacteria only in seven (41%) and mixed aerobic and anaerobic bacteria in four (24%). The predominant aerobic bacteria were Staphylococcus aureus (six isolates), Streptococcus pyogenes (three) and Pseudomonas aeruginosa (two). The most frequently isolated anaerobes were Peptostreptococcus spp. (10), Prevotella spp. (seven), micro-aerophilic streptococci (four), Peptobacterium spp. (three) and Bacteroides spp. (three). This study highlights the polymicrobial nature and predominance of anaerobic bacteria in axillary HS and the need for antimicrobial therapy to reflect this.