Boy developed “toasted skin” condition from using a laptop every day

Fears that modern electronic devices may harm children are nothing new. Gadgets with screens of any size have long been allegedly melting, rotting, and/or corrupting the brains of youths for decades. However, a medical case report published this week offers a new and alarming way our digital doodads may cause physical harm.

In BMJ Case Reports, two UK doctors, Mara Znagoveanu and Edward Artley, report the case of a boy who came to an emergency department with alarming marks on his abdomen. The marks were described as being in a patch about 15 centimeters (6 inches) wide, made of flat, reddish-brown “interlacing lines forming irregular circles and a lace-like morphology.” A picture of the marks is here.

Mysterious marks

The boy, whom they described only as being in “mid-childhood,” was not in any pain, and the rash was not warm to the touch or tender. He and his parents said they couldn’t think of any recent injuries or trauma that might explain the marks. He was otherwise healthy, hadn’t recently been ill, and had no systemic symptoms, such as fever or fatigue. Everything about the boy’s health, growth, and medical history looked normal.

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