

**CASE 35-3**

A 50-year-old man presents with a 2-week history of purpuric papules on his legs. He has a history of diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis.



**What is the one most likely diagnosis?**

- (A) Stasis dermatitis
- (B) Diabetic dermopathy
- (C) Thrombocytopenic purpura
- (D) Pigmented purpuric dermatosis
- (E) Leukocytoclastic vasculitis

The correct answer is (E), leukocytoclastic vasculitis.

The patient in this case has a classic presentation of a leukocytoclastic vasculitis, with bright red well-defined macules and scattered red papules on the lower legs and ankles, commonly referred to as “palpable purpura”. While this is a good location for stasis dermatitis and diabetic dermopathy, the bright red macules and papules are not typical lesions seen in these conditions. Purpuric macules on the lower extremities also can be seen in thrombocytopenic purpura and the pigmented purpuric dermatoses, but these lesions should not be palpable. Thus, the fact that the patient in this case has papules on his legs makes these diagnoses much less likely.