We present the case of a 36-year-old black male immigrant born in the Amazon (Brazil) who had an unstudied deformity of the second left toe since childhood. A radiograph of the foot was performed, revealing absence of the phalanges of the second toe (star in Fig. 1) with an intact corresponding metatarsal bone and a stricture of the soft tissues at the base of the toe (arrow in Fig. 1). These findings suggested the diagnosis of ainhum, also called dactylolysis spontanea. This condition of unknown aetiology occurs in the tropical and subtropical regions, usually affects black individuals\(^1\) and manifests more frequently in the fifth toe, although it can involve other toes,\(^2\) as in our case. It results from the development of a fibrotic band encircling the proximal end of the toe, leading to bone reabsorption of the phalanges followed by autoamputation. The treatment can include anti-inflammatory drugs or surgery, depending on the stage of the disease.

REFERENCES