

## A RARE CASE OF ISOLATED WRIST TUBERCULOSIS

Loh Ling Hui<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hospital Sultan Abdul Halim

**Introduction:** Extrapulmonary tuberculosis (EPTB) refers to tuberculosis infection affecting organs other than the lungs. They are usually paucibillary and diagnosis will require a combination of clinical, radiological, bacteriological and histological findings. We will discuss a rare presentation of tuberculosis of the wrist including its diagnosis, treatment and outcome.

**Discussion:** A 65-year old lady presented with a gradually increasing tender swelling over the right wrist for 2 weeks, associated with pus discharge. She had a history of hitting on a chair 1 year ago, causing generalized pain and swelling over her right hand and wrist. X-rays done in a district hospital deemed normal however the swelling persists. Her diabetes mellitus was not well controlled with oral hypoglycemic agents. Otherwise, no history is suggestive of malignancy. On examination, there is a localized tender swelling over volar aspect of the right wrist measuring 3x3cm, with erythematous skin but no discharge. Deformity is seen over the right wrist but there is no bony tenderness. Wrist x-ray showed pathological fracture over head of right 5th metacarpal bone. Chest x-ray was clear. Erythrocyte sedimentation rate and C-reactive protein were raised. Total white count, viral screening and tumour markers were unremarkable. Incision and drainage was done. Intra-operatively, 10cc pus was drained and periarticular bone erosion over distal end radius was noted. Bone biopsy reveals caseating epithelioid cell granulomas and Langhans multinucleated giant cells, consistent with tuberculosis. She was treated with anti-tuberculosis regime for 9 months. Her wound healed well and wrist range of motion was acceptable although deformity persists.

**Conclusion:** Atypical presentation of chronic swellings, joint deformity or destruction should raise the clinician's suspicion to rule out EPTB. Antituberculosis regime remains the mainstay treatment, in conjunction with surgical drainage if necessary. Early diagnosis and treatment is pivotal in preserving functional outcome.