

Gout mimicking soft tissue sarcoma of the foot

¹Chai JL; ¹Singh H; ¹Nur R AR;

¹Orthopaedic Department, Hospital Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah, Temerloh, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION:

Gout is a form of purine metabolism disorder associated with deposition of monosodium urate crystals. Chronic gout may cause deposits of hard lumps of uric acid around joints and may be indistinguishable from soft tissue sarcomas.¹

REPORT:

A 33-years-old gentleman presented with 1 week history of pain and swelling over right foot. The swelling had started insidiously 1 year ago. It rapidly increased in size and pain progressively worsened over the past month. There was no history of preceding trauma, red flag signs or history suggesting previous acute gouty arthritic episodes.



Figure 1-2: Clinical photo of the swelling right big toe.



Figure 3: Radiograph right foot showing expansile lesion over first metatarsophalangeal joint.

Physical examination reveal a 10x8cm firm circumferential swelling of the 1st metatarsophalangeal joint. It had ill-defined margins, warm, tender to touch with

hemorrhous discharge present from the mass. WCC:10.4x10⁵, ESR:46 mm/hr, CRP:47.5mg/L, Uric Acid:585umol/L. Xray showed a bony expansile lesion of the first metatarsophalangeal joint.

MRI showed an ill-defined heterogenous soft tissue mass at the 1st metatarsophalangeal joint with bony destruction.

Discharge material from the wound was sent for microscopic analysis which showed negative birefringent crystals. A wide excision involving a disarticulation of tarsometatarsal joint of right big toe was performed. HPE analysis reported as granulation tissue with presence of gouty tophi.

In cases where there is doubt between gout/soft tissue sarcoma, one must return to the basics of a detailed history, physical examination, and investigations to assist in diagnosis. The microscopy analysis played a significant role in the diagnosis of this patient.²

CONCLUSION:

This case represents a variable presentation of chronic gout. The diagnosis may sometimes not be clear cut a high index of suspicion must be maintained.

REFERENCES:

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