

Rare Presentation Of A Rare Condition – Ulnar Club Hand

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INTRODUCTION

Ulnar club hand, i.e.. ulnar hemimelia (UH), is characterised by total or partial absence of the ulna. UH is rare, affecting 1:100 000 children, and is the least common failure of formation of upper extremities.¹ We report a rare case of UH, presenting with protrusion deformity of the radial head in a female.

REPORT:

A 17-year-old girl presented with a right elbow mass, gradually increasing in size since toddlerhood. Examination revealed a hard, bony mass extending over the posterior elbow, measuring 2x3 cm, with intact skin overlying the mass. There was cubital varus deformity with full elbow function, and correctable wrist ulnar deviation. All digits were present with good function and normal first webspace. Radiographs showed deficient distal ulna, radial bowing, and posteriorly dislocated radial head. She was offered radial head resection, but still undecided.

DISCUSSION:

UH is more prevalent in males,¹ so for this rare condition to be seen in this female is even more uncommon. Patients classically present with ulnar shortening with radial bowing. While our patient demonstrated this, she also had the unusual presentation of radial head protuberance. Most UH can be managed without surgical intervention,² but in our patient, the significant radial head protrusion is cosmetically unappealing and may cause an infection in the future if it penetrates the skin.

CONCLUSION:

UH is a rare skeletal anomaly, with a spectrum of presentation ranging from mild to severe. These patients require individualised



Figure 1: Clinical images of the right upper limb



Figure 2: Plain radiographs of the limb

management, with surgical intervention as required to optimise functionality of the upper limb, avoidance of disuse atrophy and other associated complications.

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