One in a Million: Bulbar Palsy: A Rare Case of TB Spine Presentation

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INTRODUCTION:

Pott's disease is the most common extrapulmonary tuberculosis (TB) manifestation that commonly presented as back pain, tenderness, paraplegia and kyphotic or scoliotic deformities. TB spine predominantly affecting thoracic vertebra followed by cervical vertebrae specifically at the paradiscal, central, anterior subligamentous and neural arch. Following are the case report of peculiar extrapulmonary TB presentation.

REPORT:

29 years old previously healthy man, presented with headache, neck stiffness, progressive dysphagia, and significant weight loss of 37kg over 10 months. Clinical examination reveals central nervous system was unremarkable however patient noted to have isolated left tongue deviation.

Blood markers showing evidence of raised ESR and CRP. CT brain and cervical shown multilevel cervical and upper thoracic bone lesion with evidence of collection compressing at brain stem and upper cervical cord. Patient was under the impression of possible metastasis with differential of multiple myeloma prior to orthopedic referral. MRI whole spine which reveals multilevel vertebral osteomyelitic changes over whole spine (skip lesion) predominantly involving vertebral body and pedicles. Collections also reported at multiple regions with various dimensions and including extension into epidural space, subligamentous extension, pre and paravertebral region. Thus, patient undergoes intraoperative sampling and the HPE reports as necrotising granulomatous inflammation which conclusive of TB manifestation. Hence anti TB was commenced and patient symptoms improved remarkably.

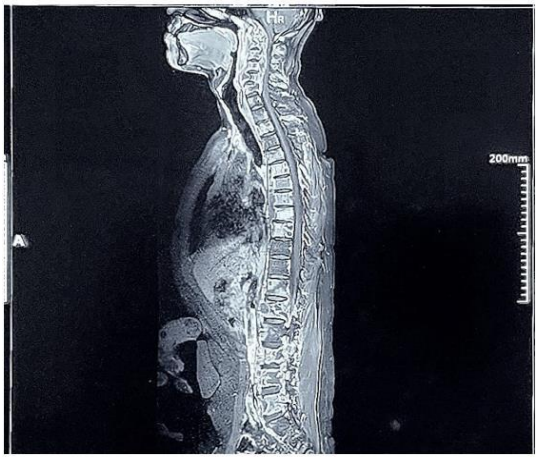

FIGURE 1: MRI WHOLE SPINE SHOWING : SKIPPED MULTIFOCAL EXTENSIVE SPINE TUBERCULOSIS

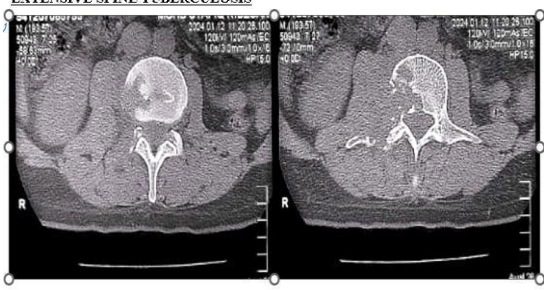

FIGURE 2 CT SCAN SHOWS OSTEOLYTIC DESTRUCTION OF THE VERTEBRAL BODY

CONCLUSION:

Establishing diagnosis was challenging as patient presentation mimics bulbar palsy however combined effort of both teams leads to fruitful outcomes and early management thereupon alleviates patient symptoms and hinders further neurological deficit.

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