

Neck Cracking of Despair. A case report.

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INTRODUCTION:

Synovial sarcoma is a rare malignant tumor that typically affects the upper and lower extremities in young adults. (2) There is only 3% of cases located in the head and neck region.(1) We present a rare case of a cervical spine synovial sarcoma which has very limited access in obtaining the biopsy.

REPORT:

A 29-year-old male, presented to our emergency department with neck pain and left shoulder pain for 2 weeks, had a history of visiting a chiropractor. Subsequently, he developed bilateral upper limb numbness a week after followed by bilateral upper limb weakness in a few days. Otherwise, the patient had no other history of trauma, no constitutional symptoms with normal urinary and bowel habit.

Neurological examination revealed the power of bilateral lower limbs were full, with intact sensation. However, bilateral upper limbs power were grade 2 with reduced sensation. There was no palpable mass or lymph nodes. Radiographs revealed reduced vertebral height over C4 (Figure 1). We proceeded with MRI (Figure 2) and revealed a C3-C5 prevertebral lobulated mass encroached into neural foramina suggestive of aggressive or malignant nerve sheath tumor or retropharyngeal chordoma.



Figure 1.

Referral to the ENT team was made for transpharyngeal biopsy. However, due to the nature of clean procedure, sample culture

reported presence of mixed organisms with normal microflora. There's a yellowish gelatinous-like tissue noted intraoperatively and was sent for biopsy. Subsequently, we proceeded with Anterior Cervical Corpectomy and Fusion with iliac bone graft due to worsening of neurological deficits. Intraoperative findings revealed presence of grayish encapsulated mass (Figure 3). Postoperatively, patient was referred to Oncology team for adjuvant therapy.

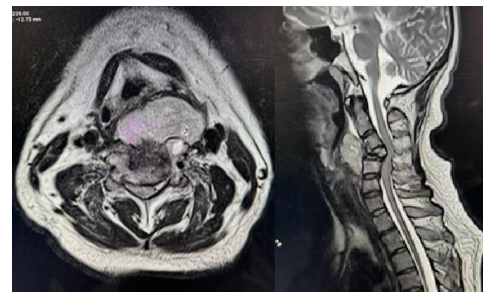


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

CONCLUSION:

High index of suspicion on primary tumor in peri-cervical lesions remains vital. A multidisciplinary team approach is mandatory in managing cervical synovial sarcoma in view of the challenges in obtaining histological diagnosis.

REFERENCES:

1. Stephen et al., Biphasic synovial sarcoma in cervical spine 2011.
2. Jae won et al., Synovial sarcoma of the posterior neck, 2010.