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Research Week 2023

Acute Calcific Tendinitis of the Longus Colli Muscle

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Keywords

Acute Calcific Tendinitis, Longus Colli Muscle

Abstract

Introduction

Acute calcific tendinitis (ACT) of the longus colli muscle is a rare and benign presentation of calcium phosphate crystal deposition disease. The calcifications are most frequently found in the superior portion of the longus colli muscle, which causes pain and a significant reduction in cervical motion due to inflammation of the anterior C1 and C2 prevertebral tissue. Literature suggests that ACT of the longus colli muscle presents following trauma or ischemic injury, resulting in the rupture of crystals prompting an inflammatory response.

Narrative

A 44-year-old man with gout and dyslipidemia was evaluated for a sudden-onset, posterior neck pain. The pulsatile, constant neck pain started three days prior to presentation and progressively worsened. The patient reported odynophagia and a limited range upon opening of the jaw. There were no sick contacts or history of trauma.

On examination, the patient was afebrile, and all other vital signs were stable. Neck movement was severely limited in all directions due to pain, and no abnormal findings were noted in the oropharynx. Laboratory results showed a mildly elevated leukocytosis of 12,900 cells per microliter and an elevated C-reactive protein of 34.1 mg/L. A CT scan revealed calcified deposits at the attachment of longus colli muscle on the anterior C2 vertebral body, confirming a diagnosis of ACT of longus colli muscle. Oral Loxoprofen was prescribed.

Discussion

This report presents a case of ACT of the longus colli muscle in a patient without a fever, headache, altered mental status, or history of trauma. ACT of the longus colli presents similarly to other more common and serious conditions such as retropharyngeal abscesses, infectious spondylitis, and meningitis. Failure to recognize this rare, yet benign condition often leads to unnecessary and invasive procedures, highlighting the importance of early recognition and correct diagnosis of ACT of the longus colli muscle.