

2. An Unusual Abscess in front of Thigh

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Abstract

Tuberculous detritus gravitate along the course Iliopsoas muscle for mingan Iliac abscess, which present just below or above the Poupart's ligament or less commonly in the Petit's triangle or the anterior surface or in the adductor region of the thigh or in the gluteal region'. We present here a case of Tuberculosis of the lower dorsal vertebral spine presenting as a giant cold abscess in front of thigh, lumbar triangle and the gluteal region.

Case Report

A 70 year old female was admitted in the Department of Surgery, Coimbatore Medical College Hospital, with a huge swelling in front of the right thigh. Patient gives no history of pain or any other definite symptoms other than inability to lift her leg while walking due to the weight of the swelling. Patient had not had any previous medical consultation. On admission patient was thin built, afebrile and grossly anaemic. On examination of the swelling on the right thigh; a tense cystic, fluctuant swelling occupying the whole of the anterior aspect of thigh, from the Inguinal ligament to about 4" from the upper border



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of patella. There was no tenderness or any signs of inflammation over the swelling. The swelling was compressible to an extent upto formation of a bulge in the right gluteal region. Another swelling was present occupying the left Lumbar region, which was about 6" x 6" in size and was also fluctant.

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On examination of the spine, tenderness was elicited over the lower dorsal spine and maximum at the tenth dorsal spine. Respiratory and cardiovascular systems were normal. Radiograph of the spine showed collapse of D 10 vertebra with angulation of the spine. Respiratory and cardiovascular system showed no abnormality.

No paravertebral abscess were visualised in X ray. Her Hb. 7.2% and sputum for acid fast bacilli and Mantoux were negative.

The abscess were incised and drained with multiple incisions. About 6.5 litres of frank pus was drained from all sites put together. Blood transfusions were given to bring the haemoglobin to normal limits. The patient had an uneventful recovery. She was later put on traction and antituberculous treatment and later discharged.

Discussion

Tuberculosis of the spine is commonest in the lower dorsal region than in the Lumbar, upper dorsal and cervical region of the vertebral column, in the order of frequency. The body of the affected vertebrae are gradually destroyed and ultimately they collapse and angulate sharply forwards.

Abscess so formed, initially track down along the psoas sheath and appear at the iliac fossa or in the femoral canal or in the anterior aspect of the upper thigh². The abscess cavity is known to grow in size and would be able to product upto a pint of pus a week. Some abscess are small and localised, but others track down in a direction determined by the fascial planes. The fascia may be perforated when an abscess is in tension, by reason of small space available for it to occupy or due to the large volume of fluid it contains.

But as abscess of the lower dorsal vertebrae are not known to migrate along such planes and attain such dimensions².

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References

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