

Swelling of the Preauricular Area: An Unusual Case of T Cell Lymphoma

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Introduction

- T Cell Lymphoma or Peripheral T cell lymphoma is a type of aggressive non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Peripheral T cell lymphoma is the most common subtype.
- The lymphoma is characterized by an abnormal proliferation of malignant T cells.
- The most common extra nodular sites are the skin and gastrointestinal system. Patient can present with systemic B symptoms such as fever, night sweats, and weight loss.
- The purpose of this study is to look at an unusual presentation of T cell lymphoma and demonstrate a different take of diagnosis of this aggressive lymphoma.

Case Presentation

- **A 60 year old male with history of BPH and COPD presented to UPMC Carlisle with a 6 week history of induration and swelling to the preauricular area.**

Hospital Course

- The patient was transferred to UPMC Harrisburg for further work-up. At UPMC Harrisburg the patient's hospital course was complicated by persistent pancytopenia and febrile episodes while on broad spectrum antibiotics.
- Hematology-Oncology was consulted, and started the patient on Neupogen with resolution. IV antibiotics were discontinued as an infectious etiology was thought to be unlikely.
- Further areas of induration and swelling were noted on the left and right chest walls, which were similar to those seen on the preauricular area.
- Several biopsies were obtained and revealed subcutaneous panniculitis as would be seen in T-cell Lymphoma.
- Outpatient bone marrow biopsy confirmed diagnosis of T cell Lymphoma.
- Staging PET-CT was obtained to aid in prognostication and staging,

revealing significant activity in the subcutaneous tissues and lymph nodes above the diaphragm.

- The patient was started on CHOP therapy and referred to Johns Hopkins University for eventual allogeneic stem cell transplant from the patient's biological



Figure 1: CT scan of the neck showing extensive skin thickening of the left side of the neck with inflammation of the parotid gland

Discussion

- T cell lymphoma commonly presents with lymph nodes in the skin and GI system
- There is no characteristic immunophenotype associated with this T cell lymphoma however T cell antigens (CD3, CD2, CD5, CD7) can be expressed.
- This atypical presentation highlights an unusual presentation and treatment of T cell lymphoma. This case identifies the importance of early evaluation and treatment in aggressive malignancies such as T cell lymphoma.

Take Home Points

- T cell lymphoma may not always present with typical symptoms of night sweats, fever, and weight loss
- As this case demonstrates preauricular area swelling that is not otherwise explained may be a presenting sign.

References

Swerdlow SH, Campo E, Pileri SA, et al. The 2016 revision of the World Health Organization classification of lymphoid neoplasms. Blood 2016; 127:2375.