



Intra-abdominal Ewing's Sarcoma

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Extraskeletal Ewing's sarcoma is a rare soft tissue tumour. Histologically it is indistinguishable from the more common Ewing's sarcoma of the bone a tumour which usually affects children and young adults. Described as a neoplasm of small round cells with large oval hyperchromatic nuclei these tumours more often occur in the chest wall and lower extremities in patients varying from infancy to elderly. In the past year we have been presented with two patients diagnosed with intra-abdominal Ewing's sarcoma.

Case 1. A 72 year old lady presented to clinic with a 6 months history of feeling generally lethargic and weight loss. She also had been complaining of early satiety and abdominal pain, worsened on eating. Examination, revealed an underweight patient and a large, hard tender mass within the epigastric region of her abdomen. The remainder of the examination was unremarkable. A computed tomography (CT) revealed a large mass measuring (20 x 11cm) which involved the spleen, pancreas and the posterior wall of the stomach. An ultrasound guided biopsy revealed malignant small round cells with hyperchromatic nuclei, scanty cytoplasm and high mitotic rate. Immunohistochemistry proved strongly positive for CD99 which favoured the diagnosis of Ewing's sarcoma. Cytogenetic analysis showing EWS/FL-1 type 2 translocation confirmed the diagnosis. The patient will receive neoadjuvant chemotherapy prior to surgical excision.

Case 2. A previously well 29 year old gentleman presented with a history of increasing discomfort and swelling over the left lower side of his abdomen. Examination revealed an easily palpable mass in the left side of his pelvis and CT scan confirmed a 12 x 8 x 11cm. mass within the pelvis. The histological diagnosis was made on biopsy which revealed features consistent with a Ewing's sarcoma, subsequently confirmed on cytogenetic analysis. Following 6 cycles of VIDE chemotherapy, a repeat CT showed the mass to have shrunk to 8 x 7 x 6cm which was excised with a para-aortic lymph node dissection.

Intra-abdominal Ewing's sarcoma is an unusual diagnosis, and one which may become more frequent with increased use of molecular typing for retroperitoneal. This may lead to a revision of the traditional classification of these tumours which had previously been based on the morphological features. This may increase the opportunity of using chemotherapy to retroperitoneal tumours which traditionally have been considered resistant to chemotherapy.