Diagnostic Images

Pulmonary varix – pathognomonic appearance

Presented by L. Kreeel and H. Wong

Department of Diagnostic Radiology and Organ Imaging, Faculty of Medicine, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Prince of Wales Hospital, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong

The patient

A female aged 22, known to have mitral valve disease was found to have a right posterior paracardiac mass. The electrocardiogram showed left axis deviation and atrial fibrillation.

Investigations

Chest radiographs and computed tomographic (CT) scan.

Comment

A well defined lung mass with clear margins and no other signs such as lymphadenopathy, pulmonary infiltration, consolidation, collapse or bone involvement usually indicates a benign lesion, whether a tumour such as an adenoma (carcinoid), cyst or vascular abnormality. Bronchogenic, pericardial and hydatid cysts do not show contrast enhancement, adenomas do enhance but not as significantly as vascular lesions. In this patient not only was the enhancement of the mass similar to the cardiac chambers but there was a vein entering the mass and a connection with a left pulmonary vein. Pulmonary varix is a recognized, albeit uncommon, complication of mitral valve disease.

![Figure 1](a) P.A. view (b) Lateral view. On the chest radiograph there are signs associated with mitral valve disease particularly a prominent left atrial appendage (arrow head). There is also a right posterior paracardiac mass.
Figure 2  On CT the mass is adjacent to the right heart border, has well defined antero-posterior borders and pulmonary vessels laterally. The lung appears normal.

Figure 3  There is contrast enhancement of the mass (white arrow) similar to the heart with a vein entering (arrow in a) and another exiting into the left atrium (black arrow in b). The enlarged left ventricle is also shown.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Media Services of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Prince of Wales Hospital) for the illustrations and Ms Sanny Chan for secretarial services.

Reference

Pulmonary varix--pathognomonic appearance.
L. Kreel and H. Wong

doi: 10.1136/pgmj.66.781.947

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://pmj.bmj.com/content/66/781/947.citation

These include:

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/