A Hypopharyngeal Lipoma Resulting in Obstructive Sleep Apnea

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A 64-year-old man presented with snoring and daytime sleepiness. Polysomnography revealed that the mean apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) was 88.2 events per hour, and the patient was diagnosed with severe obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSAS). A screening with magnetic resonance (MR) imaging showed a large, wedge-shaped, space-occupying lesion in the hypopharynx. The intensity of the signal within the lesion in MR images was homogeneous and high (Picture 1A: T1-weighted image, Picture 1B: T2-weighted image). The tumor caused severe stenosis of the hypopharynx which was a contributing factor to OSAS. The tumor was resected, and the AHI was remarkably improved (AHI: 12.3 events/hour). The 30×47×77 mm tumor had a smooth surface (Picture 2A) and was histologically diagnosed as a lipoma because it was composed of mature adipocytes closely resembling normal adipose tissue (Picture 2B). Each patient with OSAS should therefore be examined carefully for the potential presence of an upper aero-digestive tract lesion (1, 2).

References


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