Muscular Sarcoidosis Mimicking Soft Tissue Tumor

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Key words: Muscular sarcoidosis, dark star sign, three stripes sign

(DOI: 10.2169/internalmedicine.55.5661)

A 70-year-old woman was referred to our hospital to be evaluated for suspected soft tissue tumors, which were initially recognized in both of her thighs. One year previously, she was diagnosed with uveitis which spontaneously resolved. A physical examination revealed tender, palpable subcutaneous nodules in both the upper and lower extremities. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) with T2-weighted images of the lower extremities showed the “dark star” sign and “three stripes” sign (Picture 1), both of which have been reported to be specific for the nodular type of muscular sarcoidosis (1, 2). A biopsy specimen from the right vastus lateralis muscle demonstrated non-caseating epithelioid cell granuloma (Picture 2), confirming the diagnosis. Corticosteroid therapy resulted in a drastic clinical response. The increased uptake on gallium scintigraphy nearly disappeared following treatment (Picture 3). The nodular type of muscular sarcoidosis may resemble soft tissue tumors, however, the MRI findings may help physicians to make a correct diagnosis, thus averting the need for surgical resection.

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Received for publication April 25, 2015; Accepted for publication April 27, 2015
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The authors state that they have no Conflict of Interest (COI).

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