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Educational Abstract

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Left Neck Swelling; Is It Just Another Malignant Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumour?

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We present a case of a middle-aged man with cervical giant cell tumour (GCT). He presented with a one-year history of painless cervical swelling that was steadily increasing in size, hoarseness of voice, dysphagia and loss of appetite. On examination, there was a 4.0 x 5.0cm swelling at left level II with a smooth surface and soft to firm consistency. Flexible scope showed medialisation of the left lateral and posterior pharyngeal wall with a mass obstructing the epiglottis. Radiological evaluation (CT and MRI of the cervical spine) revealed a large mass with its epicenter at left prevertebral region that extends anterolaterally to the left parapharyngeal area; complicated with local infiltration to the paraspinal muscles, C2 and C3 vertebra and minimal intraspinal extension without significant spinal canal stenosis or spinal cord involvement. The differential diagnosis was malignant peripheral nerve sheath tumour, lymphoma and metastasis. It was confirmed cytologically as GCT. GCT of the bone is a rare, locally aggressive osteolytic tumour that is approximately 5% of all primary bone tumours [Mendanha]. GCT has a low incidence in the cervical spine.