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Scientific Abstract

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Abdominal Pain In Febrile Neutropenic Children : An Imaging Spectrum

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OBJECTIVES : To identify the common causes of pain abdomen in neutropenic children and their imaging features. In neutropenic patients chest infections are commoner, however they may often present with abdominal pain without localizing signs. Early identification of the cause and treatment is important to prevent mortality. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** 25 febrile neutropenic children presenting with abdominal pain were evaluated using ultrasonography first and CT if needed. **RESULTS:** The commonest cause identified in these patients was abscesses. While pyogenic liver abscesses were noted in 2 patients, the incidence of fungal abscesses was high (4 cases). They presented in liver and spleen as multiple abscesses with typical spoke-in-wheel or bull's eye appearance. In one patient with flank pain, bilateral renal abscesses were noted as multiple heterogeneously hypoechoic lesions in the renal parenchyma with no internal vascularity. Some of these appeared to communicate with a perinephric collection with echoes within. Another common cause was colitis, seen in 4 patients which appeared as bowel wall thickening with increased vascularity and ascites. Typical involvement of caecum was seen predominantly. Ascending colon involvement and pancolitis were also noted in two patients. 2 patients with disseminated fungal infections showed involvement of lungs and viscera, presented with focal lesions and infarcts involving kidneys and spleen. 1 patient having enlarged appendix with periappendiceal inflammation and fluid, was diagnosed with acute appendicitis. A rare cause of pain was abdominal tuberculosis which appeared as multiple necrotic periportal, peripancreatic and mesenteric lymph nodes. **CONCLUSION:** A high index of suspicion with knowledge of the common causes of abdominal pain is essential to identify the causes and institute early therapy.