



An Overlooked Cause of Neck Pain: Calcific Tendinitis of the Longus Colli

Hyun-Seung Rhyu; Jung-Kil Lee MD; Bong Ju Moon; Ki-Young Choi

[Institution]

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Introduction

Acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli muscle is a rare clinical entity that causes severe neck pain. This entity is not well recognized due to its non-specific presentation such as acute neck pain, neck stiffness, odynophagia or dysphagia. The importance of this disease with a review of the literature is presented.

Methods

Acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli muscle is an inflammatory condition caused by deposition of calcium hydroxyapatite in the superior oblique tendon fibers of the longus colli muscle. It can be misdiagnosed as other life-threatening conditions including retropharyngeal abscess, resulting in unnecessary medical or surgical interventions.

Results

We retrospectively reviewed the clinical data, radiological features, and laboratory reports of eight patients who were diagnosed with acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli muscle presented in this article were seen at our institution between April 2008 and March 2015. We describe the clinical presentation, diagnosis, and treatment of acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli muscle.

Conclusions

There were 5 men and 3 women who ranged in age from 41 to 49 years (mean age: 44.5 years). The associated symptoms included neck pain, stiffness, odynophagia, and headache. The duration of symptoms varied from 2 days to 1 week. All patients showed calcific deposition inferior to the anterior arch of the atlas, and prevertebral effusion extending from C1 to C4. All patients were treated with NSAIDs and immobilization with a cervical brace, and they showed complete resolution of symptoms within 1 week.

Learning Objectives

By the conclusion of the session, participatns should be able to:

- 1) don't be afraid to manage acute neck pain
- 2) don't miss that diagnosis
- 3) can manage that disease

References