

Overtreatment

Unnecessary [treatment](#) for a condition that is not life-threatening or would never cause any symptoms. Overtreatment may lead to problems and harmful side effects.

Dicuonzo et al. reported the case of a female patient aged 57 who complained about lower back pain and [cruralgia](#) and had a lumbar and sacral magnetic resonance imaging performed in the Department of Neuroradiology in [Bari](#) showing suspicious repetitive bone lesions; therefore, the patient underwent several medical procedures and laboratory exams which ended with surgical removal of a left L3-L4 foraminal disc herniation and a [bone biopsy](#).

When it was finally possible to exclude any other diseases including thyroid neoplasms, a “reassuring” [osteoporosis](#) diagnosis has been made since the lesions were likely to be degenerative and the patient underwent menopause 7 years ago. However, the multiplicity of the lesions of the vertebrae and of the pelvic bones as well as their signal could not be ignored, so a close magnetic resonance imaging follow-up has been recommended.

The present case is therefore a good example of overtreatment which may lead to delicate questions, investigating any possible mistakes in the diagnosis procedure as well as the role that [defensive medicine](#) is playing nowadays on medical procedures and the economic impact that all this can have on our healthcare system. In the end, we may ask ourselves: is “less” better, or is “more” always “more?” ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Dicuonzo F, Purciariello S, Andresciani S, De Marco A, Colamaria A, Calace A. “Less is better”-always true? Neurol Sci. 2020 Jan;41(1):41-47. doi: 10.1007/s10072-019-04016-w. Epub 2019 Aug 10. PMID: 31399879.

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