Thymoma

Thymoma and thymic carcinoma are rare epithelial tumors that originate from the thymus gland. Extrathoracic metastases occur in the liver, kidney, and bone in 1% to 15% of patients. Although thymoma and thymic carcinoma exhibit highly aggressive biological behavior, spinal metastasis is rare.

A 63-year-old man, with a history of invasive type AB thymoma treated 21 years ago, newly presented to the hospital with a dumbbell-shaped T8-T9 lesion compressing the spinal cord. A review of the literature showed only 16 previous cases of thymic tumors with thoracic spine involvement. Here, we report the lengthiest interval between the initial tumor diagnosis and the detection of spinal involvement, that was secondary to a pleural recurrence from his thymoma. The patient did well following successful excision of the intraspinal mass which had encased the T8 nerve root.

Spinal dissemination of thymic tumors can occur due to vertebral metastasis or to extension of a pleural recurrence through the intervertebral foramen. Definitive treatment for spinal lesions should be considered to provide adequate cord decompression [1].

Kim et al., described a 78-year-old man with left wrist and grasp weakness that occurred 7 days before admission. The patient underwent thymoma surgery 7 years ago and was cured. Magnetic resonance images showed a rim-enhanced mass in the C6-7-T1 epidural space. C6-7-T1 laminectomy was performed and the mass was removed. Histological examination was performed and patient was diagnosed with metastatic thymoma. The previous reported case occurred with involvement of the vertebral body or posterior element, but our case was mostly rim-enhanced and appeared as an abscess and intradural extramedullary tumor [2].

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2)
Kim JY, Lee YS, Kang DH, Kim MH, Lee JH, Lee CH, Park IS. Epidural Metastasis in Malignant Thymoma Mimicking Epidural Abscess: Case Report and Literature Review. Korean J Spine. 2017 Dec;14(4):162-165. doi: 10.14245/kjs.2017.14.4.162. Epub 2017 Dec 31. PubMed PMID: 29301178.