Calcified Uterine Myoma: An Infrequent Radiologic Finding
Mioma Calcificado: Um Achado Radiológico Raro

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Keywords: Leiomyoma/diagnostic imaging; Uterine Neoplasms/diagnostic imaging
Palavras-chave: Leiomioma/diagnóstico por imagem; Neoplasias Uterinas/diagnóstico por imagem

A 72-year-old woman, incapable of carrying out normal daily activities, with multiple co-morbidities including history of recurrent urinary tract infections, is brought to the Emergency Room for altered state of consciousness, oliguria and food refusal. At physical examination she presented a Glasgow Coma Scale of 9, hypotension (blood pressure 80/42 mmHg), tachycardia (heart rate 137 beats per minute), and a stiff, painless, palpable mass in the hypogastrium. Blood tests showed hyperlactatemia, elevated inflammatory parameters (leucocytes 26150 per mm³, 94% neutrophils; C-reactive protein 26.97 mg/dL), renal dysfunction (urea 178 mg/dL, creatinine 3.23 mg/dL) and a pathologic urine sediment with leukocyturia and nitrituria. The diagnosis of urosepsis was made and she was given intravenous antibiotic with ceftriaxone 1 g after collecting urine and blood cultures. Once ultrasound (US) was not available at the moment, an abdominal radiogram was performed to rule out foreign bodies, exhibiting a radio-opaque, rounded image in the pelvis, with a popcorn calcification pattern (Fig. 1), later proven to be a calcified myoma already documented in a previous uterine US. A Proteus mirabilis was isolated in both urine and blood cultures, exhibiting an antibiogram with susceptibility to cephalosporins. Despite the early initiation of...
treatment, the patient showed signs of clinical deterioration, with multiorgan dysfunction, dying in the following day.

The differential diagnosis of calcified pelvic masses includes a large variety of benign and malignant entities such as calcified aneurysms, bladder stones, dystrophic calcification of soft tissues following hemorrhage or inflammation, lithopedia, foreign bodies, and calcified neoplasms.\(^1\) Ultrasonography is the first-line imaging examination for pelvic masses with high sensitivity and specificity for uterine myomas.\(^2\) Computer tomography and magnetic resonance can be helpful in patients in whom ultrasound findings are unclear.\(^2\) Usually performed for other reasons, plain radiograph can show a popcorn pattern that, even though it is not a pathognomonic sign, when present, highly suggests the diagnosis of uterine leiomyomas.\(^3\)

Leiomyomas (or fibroids) are benign tumors of smooth muscle origin, with varying amounts of fibrous connective tissue.\(^4\) They are the most common solid pelvic tumors in women, often asymptomatic and incidentally diagnosed when performing imaging for other reasons. Through aging, fibroids may greatly enlarge, with a benign, non-infiltrative pattern of growth, and might compress surrounding organs such as the bladder, which can lead to urinary retention and infection. Rarely, due to this mass effect, patients may present with hydrenephrosis or bowel obstruction.\(^4\) Calcification tends to occur following necrosis when fibroids outgrow their blood supply.\(^5\) Surgical treatment should be considered when symptomatic.

**Responsabilidades Éticas**

**Conflitos de Interesse:** Os autores declararam a inexistência de conflitos de interesse na realização do presente trabalho.

**Fontes de Financiamento:** Não existiram fontes externas de financiamento para a realização deste artigo.

**Confidencialidade dos Dados:** Os autores declararam ter seguido os protocolos da sua instituição acerca da publicação dos dados de doentes.

**Consentimento:** Consentimento do doente para publicação obtido.

**Proveniência e Revisão por Pares:** Não comissionado; revisão externa por pares.

**Ethical Disclosures**

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

**Financing Support:** This work has not received any contribution, grant or scholarship.

**Confidentiality of Data:** The authors declare that they have followed the protocols of their work center on the publication of data from patients.

**Patient Consent:** Consent for publication was obtained.

**Provenance and Peer Review:** Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.

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