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An overlooked cause of neck pain: Calcific tendinitis of the longus colli

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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. 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. We retrospectively reviewed eight patients who were diagnosed with acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli between April 2008 and March 2015. There were eight patients (five men, three women) and mean age was 44.5 year-old (from 41 to 49). The associated symptoms included neck pain, stiffness, odynophagia and headache. The duration of symptoms varied from two days to one 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 one week. We report eight cases of acute calcific tendinitis of the longus colli, and describe the symptoms and radiological findings in detail. Awareness of this rare, benign and self-limiting disease entity with characteristic radiologic findings is essential for early diagnosis and to avoid unnecessary medical and surgical interventions.

Biography

Jae Young Park completed his Graduation from Chonnam National Medical School and Residency in Department of Neurosurgery of Chonnam National University Hospital. He is Clinical Fellow in Department of Neurosurgery, Chonnam National University.

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