

A UNIQUE CASE OF UNILATERAL KNEE EFFUSION

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Introduction: Unilateral knee effusion and pain are common presentation especially among elderly patient who actively ambulating. Common atraumatic impressions are septic arthritis, acute flare of osteoarthritis and gouty arthritis.

Discussion: We present a case of 80 years old lady with underlying hypertension complained of right knee pain and swelling for 2 weeks not preceded by history of trauma or infection. Clinically she had right knee swelling with positive patella tap, range of motion slightly limited due to knee effusion compared to the normal side. Initially she was admitted for pain management where symptomatic and diagnostic tapping of right knee was done. Full investigations including knee radiograph, connective tissue disease work out, gout, rheumatoid factors as well as knee aspirate was done and came out to be normal and unremarkable. Patient was discharge with pain killer and RICE therapy. During subsequent follow up, patient was found out to have syphilis during yearly medical check up. Case was notified and patient was given IM Benzathine penicillin 2.4 mega unit weekly for 3 weeks. Patient currently still under outpatient follow up for syphilis and claimed right knee swelling and pain much improving.

Conclusion: Syphilis may be rare in Keningau population and was unexpected to has connection with her chief complaint. Limited experience in diagnosing and treatment of this disease may affect the outcome as it may remain latent until more serious manifestation. This case highlights the fact that secondary syphilis can affect multiple system including musculoskeletal system and may be the main reason for patient first contact to medical care. The condition responded to antibiotic therapy. Thus, we should be aware and consider this condition as differentials in patient with acute arthropathy.