

Ancient Schwannoma of an Ulnar Nerve - A Rare Case

¹Rajanthran P, ¹Lau SY, ¹Jojo CW, ¹Tan HP

¹Department of Orthopedic, Hospital Sibul, Sarawak

INTRODUCTION:

Ancient schwannoma is a rare and slow-growing benign peripheral nerve sheath tumor that has degenerative changes histologically due to the chronicity of the tumor. Diffuse hypocellular areas, nuclear hyperchromasia and marked nuclear atypia are the common features.¹

CASE REPORT:

This is a 37-year-old housewife, complained of right arm swelling for past 10 years, and recently had electrical sensation down to ring and little fingers upon touching the swelling. Examination showed painless mass over medial right arm with well-defined margin and mobile in the longitudinal plane. Tinel's sign was positive.

Radiograph noticed soft tissue swelling over her right arm. Nerve conduction study was normal. MRI showed well-defined heterogenous mass (4.8x5.7x6.6cm) located in closed proximity to ulnar nerve, representing a peripheral nerve sheath tumor (PNST).

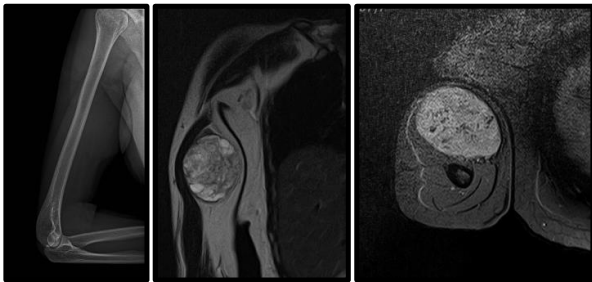


Figure 1 - Radiograph and MRI images.

Upon excision biopsy, ulnar nerve was identified with an encapsulated mass. Complete excision was difficult due to dense fascicular involvement of the derived nerve, hence debulking was done.



Figure 2 - Clinical and intraoperative findings.

Histopathological examination showed spindled cells (positive for S100) arranged in storiform pattern with compact and loose distribution. There were Verocay bodies seen with pleomorphic nuclei. Overall features were suggestive of ancient schwannoma. No sensory or motor deficit was observed immediately and 3-months post-operatively.

DISCUSSION:

Ancient schwannoma rarely develops in the extremities. Early surgical excision is the preferred treatment modality before the involvement of nerve fascicles as it grows larger which was observed in this case. Though rare, incomplete resection may cause local recurrence.²

CONCLUSION:

Excision of the Ancient schwannoma can be difficult because of its dense attachment to the nerve. All efforts should be made to preserve the nerve and early excision is recommended before it gets more entangled with the nerve.

REFERENCE:

1. Malizos et al. Ancient schwannoma involving the median nerve: a case report and review of the literature. *Strategies Trauma Limb Reconstr.* 2013 Apr;8(1):63-6
2. T Yoon, KY Hong. Multiple ancient schwannomas of the ulnar nerve at distant sites: a case report. *Arch Hand Microsurg.* 2022;27(1):88-92.