

Subareolar Breast Abscess in Male: A Rare Presentation

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Dear Sir,

Subareolar abscess (SA) is a distinct clinicopathological condition in female breast. However, few case reports of Subareolar breast abscess have been published in males also. Though Gynaecomastia is the most common cause of benign masses in male breast [1,2], rarely other benign lesions like subareolar abscess, lipoma, pilar cysts are also noted. Herein, we report a case of subareolar breast abscess in male.

A 40 years old male presented with an ill defined swelling in left breast in the retromammary region for last four months and was progressively increasing in size. On examination, swelling was approximately 1X1 cms, non-tender, slightly fixed. There was no discharge from the nipple, no history of trauma or any contact of tuberculosis.

Fine needle aspiration cytology was performed maintaining aseptic conditions and smears were made & stained with Geimsa, Pap and Ziehl-Nelsen stain. On microscopic examination, smears consisted mainly of neutrophils and macrophages (Fig 1, 2). Innumerable squamous cells, appearing anucleated were also noted alongwith foreign body giant cells and keratinous debris in the background (Fig 1b). Zeihl-Nelsen stain for Acid Fast bacilli was negative.

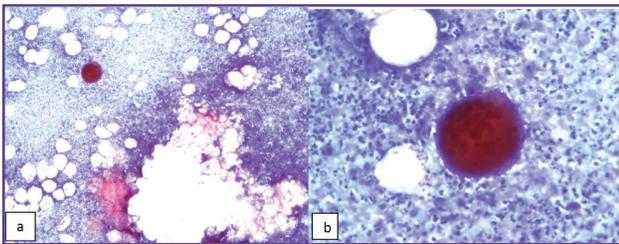


Fig. 1 (a&b): Hallmark of Subareolar abscess: presence of squamous cells and neutrophils (Pap, X100). Multinucleated Giant cells noted in Fig 1b (Pap, X 200)

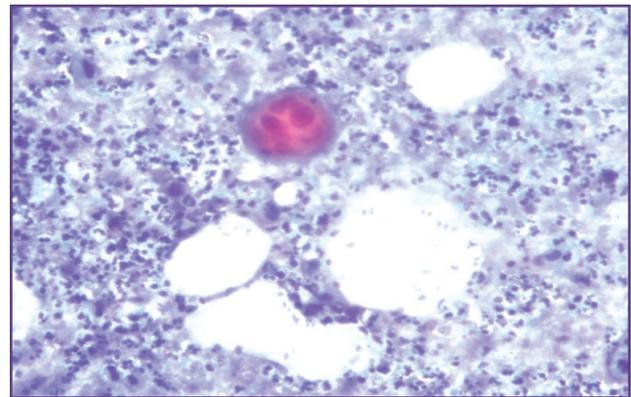


Fig. 2: Subareolar abscess with squames, neutrophils & macrophages

Subareolar abscess is a long-standing inflammatory condition in the region of nipple. Initially the patient presents with pain & swelling, but gradually it forms abscess and chances of sinus tract formation and recurrences increase. In a study by Galdblun & Oertel[3], it was stated that apart from polymorphonuclear neutrophils, presence of anucleated squames is must for the diagnosis of Subareolar abscess, as it rules out the possibility of mastitis.

To conclude, Subareolar abscess is an important entity which should be kept in mind by pathologists while evaluating breast mass in males[4]. FNAC is widely used, simple and cost effective means which helps in making early diagnosis of SA. Accurate and early diagnosis of SA in males help surgeons in adopting proper surgical intervention for the lesion as these are prone for recurrences[5].

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Competing Interests

None declared

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