

Images in...

Indolent joint swelling of the metacarpal: atypical tuberculosis monarthrititis

Rosa Solà,¹ Rosa-M Espax,² Gabriel de Febrer¹¹Department of Internal Medicine, Hospital Universitari Sant Joan de Reus, Unitat de Recerca de Lípids i Arteriosclerosi, CIBERDEM, Institut Investigació Sanitària Pere Virgili, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Reus, Spain;²Radiology Department, Hospital Universitari Sant Joan de Reus, Unitat de Recerca de Lípids i Arteriosclerosi, CIBERDEM, Institut Investigació Sanitària Pere Virgili, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Reus, Spain**Correspondence to** Professor Rosa Solà, rosa.sola@urv.cat**DESCRIPTION**

Tuberculosis case detection remains difficult, partly because of atypical clinical presentations. We present an atypical tuberculosis monarthrititis of the hand.^{1 2} A 66-year-old man with refractory anaemia with excess of blasts and cryptogenic cirrhosis presented an indolent joint swelling of the third metacarpal on the left hand. Radiographs showed destructive changes within the joint and in periarticular structures (figure 1). Chest x-ray was normal. The Zielh–Nielsen test of articular tissue obtained by needle biopsy identified acid-fast bacilli. Löwenstein culture revealed *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. An initial 2-month intensive phase therapy included isoniazid (300 mg/d), ethambutol (15 mg/d), rifampin (600 mg/d) and pyrazinamide (2 g/d) because the patient was immunocompromised despite being HIV-negative. Daily therapy with isoniazid and rifampin was continued for an additional 16 months. Minimal articular disability was observed at the completion of therapy. An indolent tumour in a joint should include tuberculosis in the differential diagnosis of destructive osteoarticular lesions so as to avoid permanent articular-associated disability.

Competing interests None.**Patient consent** Obtained.**REFERENCES**

1. Cox H, van Cutsem G. Household screening and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis. *Lancet* 2011;**377**:103–4.
2. Lönnroth K, Castro KG, Chakaya JM, *et al*. Tuberculosis control and elimination 2010–50: cure, care, and social development. *Lancet* 2010;**375**:1814–29.



Figure 1 Radiographs showed destructive changes within the joint and in periarticular structures on the left hand.

This pdf has been created automatically from the final edited text and images.

Copyright 2011 BMJ Publishing Group. All rights reserved. For permission to reuse any of this content visit <http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions>.
BMJ Case Report Fellows may re-use this article for personal use and teaching without any further permission.

Please cite this article as follows (you will need to access the article online to obtain the date of publication).

Solà R, Espax RM, de Febrer G. Indolent joint swelling of the metacarpal: atypical tuberculosis monarthritis. *BMJ Case Reports* 2011; 10.1136/bcr.07.2011.4458, date of publication

Become a Fellow of BMJ Case Reports today and you can:

- ▶ Submit as many cases as you like
- ▶ Enjoy fast sympathetic peer review and rapid publication of accepted articles
- ▶ Access all the published articles
- ▶ Re-use any of the published material for personal use and teaching without further permission

For information on Institutional Fellowships contact consortiasales@bmjgroup.com

Visit casereports.bmj.com for more articles like this and to become a Fellow