Primary synovial osteochondromatosis of the ankle

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DESCRIPTION

A 35-year-old man presented with an 18-month history of chronic left ankle pain and swelling. The pain was a dull ache and present throughout the day. On examination, there was swelling of the left ankle, more anteriorly, with palpable loose bodies. There was associated terminal restriction of motion. Radiographs of the left ankle revealed multiple subcentimeter osseous structures in the anterior of the tibiotalar joint (figure 1A). Sagittal T1-weighted MRI showed multiple subcentimeter hypointense structures in the same localisation as determined on the ankle radiographs (figure 1B). Imaging confirmed the diagnosis of primary synovial osteochondromatosis of the left ankle. He was treated by open excision of the osteochondromatous lesions within the joint (figure 2A,B).

Primary synovial osteochondromatosis is an uncommon generally benign disorder characterised by formation of cartilaginous bodies within the synovia of the different joints, tendon sheaths and bursae. Although the aetiology is unknown, there are data suggesting neoplastic origin with chromosome 6 abnormalities.¹ It most commonly involves large joints such as the knee, hip and elbow. Depending on the location, there can be little restriction on the range of motion, which could allow significant growth of the cartilaginous bodies and thus delayed diagnosis of osteochondromatosis.² The diagnosis of synovial osteochondromatosis is commonly made following a thorough history, physical examination and radiological examination. Since this condition tends to be progressive but self-limiting, indications for surgery depend on the

Figure 1 (A) The ankle radiographs showing multiple subcentimeter osseous structures (arrow) in the anterior of the tibiotalar joint. (B) Sagittal T1-weighted MRI reveals multiple subcentimeter hypointense osseous structures (arrow) at the same localisation.

Figure 2 Intraoperative photographic views of the patient diagnosed with primary synovial osteochondromatosis.

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level of symptomatic presentation in addition to the functional demands of the patient.

Learning point

Primary synovial osteochondromatosis is an uncommon generally benign disorder characterised by formation of cartilaginous bodies within the synovia of the different joints, tendon sheaths and bursae.

Competing interests None.

Patient consent Obtained.

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