FOCAL FATTY INFILTRATION OF THE LIVER MIMICKING A TUMOR

腫瘍に似た肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤

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腫瘍に似た肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤

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Summary

Focal fatty infiltration of the liver detected by ultrasonography in this asymptomatic woman had unusual features. It appeared as a sharply-marginated, spherical mass lesion on computed tomography (CT), with soft tissue attenuation values of 30 Hounsfield units (HU) unenhanced, and 50 HU with enhancement. This tumor-like zone completely resolved on follow-up ultrasonography and CT, underscoring the need for follow-up examinations to exclude primary or metastatic tumors. Our review of the literature failed to reveal previous reports of features such as these.

INTRODUCTION

Ultrasonography has already proven to be an effective means of abdominal screening of the Adult Health Study subjects¹ for cancer and other diseases. The increased use of real-time ultrasonography has facilitated the incidental identification of normal variants and lesions of minor pathological consequence as an important contribution, and a basis for identifying serious abnormalities and diseases.² CT is a proven means for the practical observation of patients suspected of having focal or diffuse liver disease.³ Although focal fatty infiltration of the liver is a well-recognized established entity, ⁴-6 we encountered a case with unusual features of focal fatty infiltration, posing diagnostic problems.

要約

超音波検査によってこの無症状の女性に認められた 肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤は通常とは異なった所見を 呈した。それはコンピューター断層検査(CT)上, 境界鮮明で球状の腫瘤性病変として現われ,造影前後 でそれぞれ30及び50 Hounsfield 単位(HU)の軟部 組織の減衰値をもっていた。この腫瘍様領域は超音波 検査とCTの経過観察で完全に消失し,そして原発性 あるいは転移性腫瘍を除外するためには経過観察が 必要であることが強調された。文献学的に検討した ところ,このような特徴を報告したものは以前には 見当たらなかった。

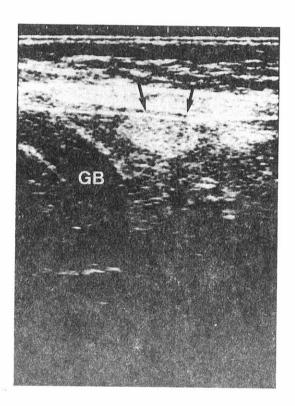
緒言

超音波検査は、成人健康調査対象者¹ における癌その他の疾患を探知する効果的な腹部スクリーニングの方法であることが既に証明されている。実時間超音波検査の使用の増加に伴い、病理学的意義が少ない通常の変異及び病変が偶然探知されることが多くなり、その貢献は大きく、また、重篤な異常及び疾患を確認する基礎も固まってきた.² CT は、限局性又は瀰漫性の肝臓疾患を疑わせる患者を実際に観察するための確実な方法である.³ 肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤は、十分に認識され確立された病変⁴⁻⁶ であるが、我々は、診断学的に問題のある、通常とは異なった所見を呈する限局性脂肪浸潤の1例を認めた.

This case is of clinical interest because its manifestations mimicked a liver tumor

Case Report MF#

This 58-year-old woman was completely asymptomatic, and on physical examination during palpation there was no evidence of an abdominal mass. All of her laboratory findings were normal. During ultrasonography of her abdomen, there was a well-defined small region having a high-echoic level in the anterior portion of the medial segment of the left lobe of the liver near the falciform ligament. It measured 2.5×3.0×2.0 cm (Figure 1).



所見が肝腫瘍に似ているので,この症例は臨床的に 興味深いものである.

症例報告, MF番号

この58歳の女性は全く無症状であり、理学的検査の触診でも腹部腫瘤の徴候はなかった。臨床検査所見もすべて正常であった。腹部に超音波検査を行ったところ、鎌状間膜付近の肝臓左葉の内側区域の前部に、高レベルのエコーを出す境界明瞭な小領域が認められた。その大きさは、 $2.5 \times 3.0 \times 2.0 \, \mathrm{cm}$ であった(図1).

Figure 1. This 58-year old woman was completely asymptomatic. Subcostal ultrasonographic scanning showed a small well-defined zone (arrows) having a high-echoic level in the anterior portion of the medial segment of the left hepatic lobe, near the falciform ligament. It measured $2.5 \times 3.0 \times 2.0$ cm. GB=Gallbladder

図1 この58歳の女性は全く無症状であった. 肋骨下に 超音波検査走査を行ったところ, 鎌状間膜付近の肝臓 左葉の内側区域の前部に, 高レベルのエコーを発する輪郭 明瞭な小領域(矢印)が認められた.その大きさは, 2.5×

GB=胆囊

 $3.0 \times 2.0 \, \text{cm}$ であった.

Liver CT subsequently also showed a spherical, sharply marginated zone in the anteromedial segment of the left hepatic lobe. This had a mean attenuation of 30 HU unenhanced, and 50 HU after enhancement. The range of mean attenuation values for the remainder of the liver was about 75 HU. Following the intravenous injection of contrast medium, a well-demarcated zone was well visualized (Figures 2a and b). A scintigram and angiography of the liver showed no abnormality. Peritoneoscopy revealed a

続いて行った肝臓 CT でも、肝臓左葉の前部内側 区域に、球状の境界鮮明な領域が観察された.造影前/後の平均減衰値は、それぞれ30及び50HU 値であった. 肝臓の残りの部分の平均減衰値は約75HUであった. 造影剤の静脈内注射により、境界鮮明な領域が十分に描出された(図2a及びb). 肝臓のシンチグラムと血管造影では異常は認められなかった. 腹腔鏡検査により、肝臓左葉の前部内側表面に、

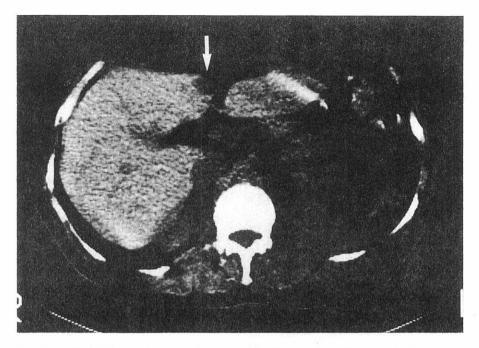


Figure 2a. CT of the liver also showed a small well-defined zone (white arrow) in the anteromedial segment of the left hepatic lobe.

図2a 肝臓の CT でも, 肝臓左葉の内側区域の前部に輪郭明瞭な小領域(白い矢印)が認められた.

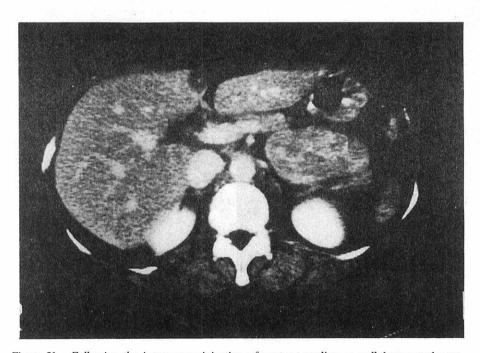


Figure 2b. Following the intravenous injection of contrast medium, a well-demarcated zone was well visualized.

図2b 造影剤を静脈注射したところ, 境界鮮明な領域が十分に描出された.

focal sharply demarcated vellow area on the surface of the anteromedial aspect on the left hepatic lobe. The surface was smooth and the appearance was that of focal fatty infiltration of the liver. A needle biopsy was performed and histologically, yielded normal liver parenchyma. Seven months later, follow-up ultrasonography showed that the previously described lesion had resolved completely. The patient was not taking medications during this seven-month interval. No other change was observed in the liver or other organs (Figure 3). Subsequently, liver CT also showed that the zones which had low densities were either not apparent or only minimally apparent, without and with contrast enhancement (Figures 4a and b). She is being observed periodically by follow-up ultrasono-No other pathological confirmation graphy. could be obtained.

GB

限局性の境界鮮明な黄色の領域が認められた.表面は滑らかであり、肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤の外観を呈していた.針生検を行い、組織学的には正常な肝臓実質が得られた.7か月後、追跡超音波検査を行ったところ、前述した病変は完全に消失していた.この7か月間は、患者への投薬は行っていない.肝臓その他の臓器に他の病変は認められなかった(図3).その後行った肝臓 CT でも、淡い陰影を示した領域が、造影前/後ともに、全く認められないか、ごくわずかに認められるかであった(図4a及びb).患者は、追跡超音波検査により定期的に診察を受けている.その他の病理学的確認は得られなかった.

Figure 3. About seven months later, during follow-up ultrasonography, the previously described lesion had resolved completely. During this seven-month interval the patient had not taken any medication. No other change was observed in the liver or other organs. GB=Gallbladder

図3 7か月後の追跡超音波検査で見ると、前述の病変は完全に消失していた。この7か月間には、患者への投薬は行っていない。肝臓その他の臓器には、他に著変は観察されなかった。

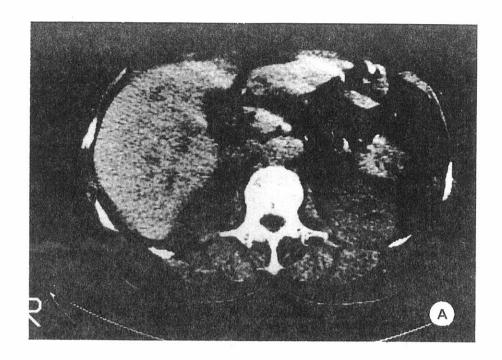
GB=胆囊

DISCUSSION

Fatty infiltration of the liver generally has underlying increased levels of triglycerides in hepatocytes in droplet form. Fatty infiltration is associated with alcoholism, diabetes mellitus, exogenous and endogenous obesity, relative

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肝臓の脂肪浸潤の一般的原因は,肝細胞中のトリグリセリドが小滴状に増加することである.脂肪浸潤は,アルコール中毒症,糖尿病,外因性及び内因性



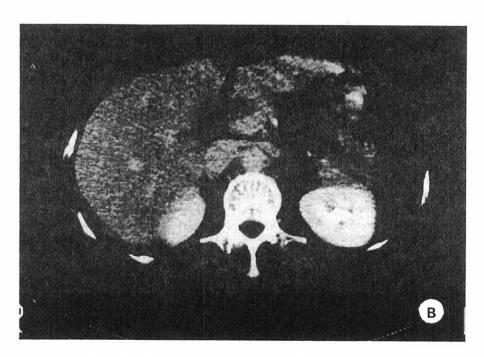


Figure 4. CT of the liver also showed that the zones which had low densities were either not apparent or only minimally apparent, a) without and b) with contrast enhancement. 24 肝臓の CT でも,低濃度を示していた領域が, a) 造影前/後ともに,全く認められないか,又は b) ごくわずかに認められるかであった.

nutritional deficiencies due to neoplastic diseases, etc. 4-10 Halvorsen et al reported that 1 of every 16 cases of focal fatty infiltration of the liver had no known cause. The patient described here had no discernible cause for her focal fatty infiltration which completely resolved within seven months, according to ultrasonography and CT.

Fatty infiltration may be focal, irregular, or diffuse, and permanent or reversible. The reason for the heterogeneous distribution of fat in the liver is unknown.

Hepatic parenchymal fat is usually echogenic. Behan and Kazam¹¹ suggested that the echogenic appearance of fatty livers and fatty masses may be based on the presence of multiple fat/nonfat interfaces, and not on fibrous tissue interfaces. Bree et al² reported the differential diagnosis of a solitary echogenic mass seen during ultrasonography of the liver includes hemangioma, the most common benign liver tumor, hepatocellular carcinoma, liver cell adenoma, focal nodular hyperplasia, and solitary metastasis. Focal fatty infiltration, as described here, should also be included. Tanaka et al12 reported a similar case of focal fatty degeneration of the liver in which the echo pattern and low-power microscopic observations of the surgical specimen closely resembled those of the hepatocellular carcinoma with fatty metamorphosis. report did not include CT images.

CT facilitates the detection of fatty liver tissue because the attenuation values of fat are relatively low compared to those of normal hepatic parenchyma. Studies in rabbits¹³ and humans¹⁴ have shown that the relatively low CT numbers reflect the liver triglyceride concentrations in a generally linear fashion. Halvorsen et al4 reported that focal fatty liver often has a distinctive CT appearance, usually with a poorly marginated, nonspherical shape, absence of mass effect, and a density approximating water. In the present case, focal fatty infiltration appeared as a spherical, sharply-marginated mass having soft tissue attenuation values of 30 HU unenhanced, and 50 HU after enhancement. It was difficult to differentiate focal fatty infiltration of the liver from small hemangiomas, and primary and secondary malignancies by ultrasonography and CT.

の肥満,腫瘍性疾患による相対的栄養不良等と関連している.4-10 Halvorsen ら4 の報告によれば,肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤の16例に付き1例は原因不明であった。この患者の限局性脂肪浸潤は,7か月以内に完治したが,超音波検査と CT では明瞭な原因は確認できなかった。

脂肪浸潤には,限局性,不規則性又は瀰漫性,並び に永続性又は可逆性がある.肝臓における脂肪の 不均一な分布の原因は不明である.

肝臓実質の脂肪は、通常高エコー値を示す。Behan 及び Kazam¹¹ は、脂肪肝及び脂肪腫瘤からエコーが起こるのは、線維組織界面によるものではなく、複数の脂肪/非脂肪界面の存在によるものでありうることを示唆した。Bree ら² の報告によれば、肝臓の超音波検査による孤立性エコーで認められた腫瘤の鑑別診断を行ったところ、最もよく認められる良性肝腫瘍である血管腫、そして肝細胞癌、肝細胞腺腫、限局性結節性過形成及び孤立性転移が認められた。ここに述べた限局性脂肪浸潤もこれに含めるべきである。田中ら¹² は、肝臓の限局性脂肪変性を示す同様の症例について報告しているが、その外科標本のエコー・パターンと低倍率の顕微鏡所見は、脂肪変性を有する肝細胞癌のそれと酷似したものであった。彼らの報告には CT 像は含まれていない。

脂肪の減衰値は,正常な肝臓実質に比べて相対的に低いので,CTを用いると脂肪性の肝組織の検出が容易になる.ウサギ¹³及びヒト¹⁴の研究によれば,相対的に低いCT値は,肝臓のトリグリセリドの濃度がおおむね線形になることを示している.Halvorsenら⁴の報告によると,限局性脂肪肝のCT像は,通常境界が不明瞭で,非球状を示し,腫瘤による影響がなく,密度もほぼ水に近いなど,しばしば独特の所見を呈する.本症例の限局性脂肪浸潤は,球状の境界鮮明な腫瘤であり,造影前/後の軟組織における減衰値はそれぞれ30及び50HUであった.超音波検査とCTによって,肝臓の限局性脂肪浸潤を小血管腫並びに原発性及び転移性腫瘍と鑑別することは困難であった.

Liver scintigraphy is often useful for making this differentiation, since fat deposition does not produce a defect on the collidal scan. 4.8.9 However, because of the small size and peripheral location of the lesion described here, angiography and histological examination were performed. Although no histological finding of fatty infiltration of the liver was obtained, the disappearance of the lesion on both follow-up ultrasonography and CT was considered sufficient evidence on which to base this diagnosis.

Although uncommon, focal fatty infiltration of the liver should be considered in the differential diagnosis of focal hepatic lesions. コロイド・スキャンでは、脂肪沈着は欠損を示さないので、この鑑別には、肝臓シンチグラフィがしばしば有用である.4.8.9 しかし、ここに述べた病変は小さく、末梢部に位置しているため、血管造影法と組織学的検査法を行った。肝臓の脂肪浸潤の組織学的所見は得られなかったが、追跡超音波検査及びCTの両方で病変が消失していたことは、この診断の根拠としての十分な証拠になるものと考えられた.

よく認められるものでないとはいえ、肝臓の限局性 脂肪浸潤も、限局性肝臓病変の鑑別診断の対象と して考慮に入れるべきであろう.

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