

A rare case of post-menopausal fibroid degeneration associated with shortness of breath

Dr M. Goloba (MBChB, Bsc, PhD) (contact: muti.goloba@nhs.net)

OBJECTIVE

To present a rare case of fibroid degeneration in a post-menopausal woman presenting remotely to her general practitioner with abdominal pain and sub-acute symptoms of shortness of breath.

BACKGROUND

Fibroid degeneration is rare in the post-menopausal period. Patients can present with sepsis (Figure 1)

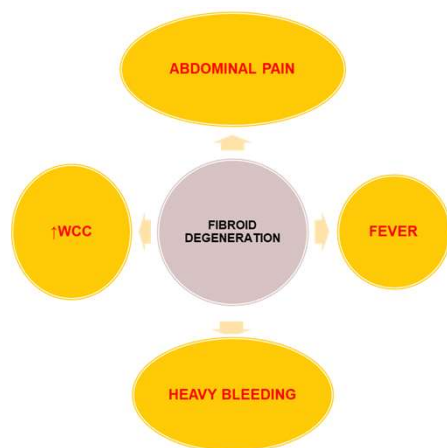


Figure 1: Symptoms of fibroid degeneration

CASE REPORT

Consultation setting and history

- Telephone consultation in primary care setting during COVID-19 pandemic
- 55-year old nulliparous post-menopausal woman
- 1-week history of abdominal pain, vaginal bleeding

Examination

- Same-day face-to-face consultation
- Temperature: 38.9, heart rate: 116 beats/minute, blood pressure: 166 / 88 mmHg
- 30-week sized multiple fibroid uterus
- Generalised tenderness in suprapubic area and iliac fossa

Same-day urgent hospital assessment

- ↑ C-reactive protein 224mg/L; ↑ White cell count $15.8 \times 10^9/L$; ↓ Haemoglobin of $101 \times 10^9/L$
- **Transvaginal ultrasound: fibroid degeneration**
- **CT abdomen and pelvis: confirming fibroid degeneration**
- **CT chest: mediastinal lymphadenopathy**

In-hospital admission and treatment

- 5-day course of intravenous antibiotics

Follow-up and outpatient clinic review

- Investigations with PET-CT, endobronchial US and biopsy of mediastinal lymph nodes → **undiagnosed sarcoidosis**

DISCUSSION

- Fibroid degeneration in the post-menopausal period is rare and is an especially challenging diagnosis to make as symptoms and signs mimic other more common differentials of an acute abdomen
- Uterine manifestations of sarcoidosis are rare

CONCLUSIONS

- Face-to-face assessments are essential in all women with a known history of fibroids and abdominal pain even in the postmenopausal period.
- Sarcoidosis should be considered in patients presenting with fibroids and a history of unexplained respiratory symptoms.

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