

Case Report: Median Nerve Lipofibromatous Hamartoma

Slowly but surely: a teenage boy with gradual-onset wrist weakness.
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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Lipofibromatous hamartoma is a rare benign slow growing tumor of peripheral nerves that is characterized by fibroadipose tissue infiltration of the epineurium and perineurium. It most commonly develops in the median nerve. The etymology remains unclear, but the tumor is largely considered congenital and most frequently affects young Caucasian males during childhood.

METHODS: This is a case of a 15 y/o male who presents with gradual-onset right wrist pain, numbness, weakness, tingling and swelling. He was first seen for this at age 6, when it was asymptomatic and located in the palm. At that time, he was diagnosed with a benign soft tissue mass by his PCP and told to follow up after an ultrasound of the area, which was not completed. The patient states that this mass has migrated from his palm to his wrist over the past 2 years. He also notes tenderness to palpation and worsening pain with writing and playing football. He complains of occasional numbness and paresthesias in the first three digits, but denies weakness. Family history is negative for similar complaints. Review of systems is otherwise negative.

RESULTS: MRI and EMG findings are consistent with median nerve involvement. The wrist mass is ultimately diagnosed as a lipofibromatous hamartoma. As surgical removal of the hamartoma would compromise nerve function, Orthopedics recommended surgical decompression and debulking for symptomatic relief.

CONCLUSIONS: This case demonstrates the typical clinical presentation, complications, diagnostic work-up, and possible treatment for lipofibromatous hamartomas. This tumor, although rare, should always be considered as part of the differential in patients with median compression neuropathy.