Images in...

Lung hydatid cysts

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DESCRIPTION

A 36-year-old, otherwise healthy man presented with a 3-week history of dry cough. He had no other symptom such as dyspnoea, chest pain, fever, and anorexia or weight loss. He was an employee in an urban post office but recalled exposure to domestic animals in a rural area in previous months.

On physical examination, he was reasonably well. There were coarse inspiratory crackles over both lungs; otherwise, the rest of the exam was normal.

Figure 1 (A, B) Chest radiography and a section of CT scanning of thorax illustrating multiple well-circumscribed masses of variable sizes over both lungs.

Chest radiography showed multiple well-demarcated mass-like lesions over both lungs (figure 1A). CT scanning of lungs showed multiple well demarcated round and homogenous masses of variable size over both lungs (figure 1B). Based on patient's history, mild blood eosinophilia, strong positivity for *Echinococcus* IgG and imaging data, multi-focal lung hydatidosis was the most probable diagnosis. Abdominopelvic CT scanning also revealed multiple cysts over the liver, spleen and pancreas (figure 2). There was no evidence of hydatid cysts on the brain or cardiac imaging. Due to the extent of disease, surgical resection was not reasonable. Therefore, he was treated by a 2-year regimen of albendazole and recommended to be followed-up on a regular base.

Lung hydatidosis is a parasitic infection caused by larval stage of *Echinococcus granulosus*. Uncomplicated cysts remain asymptomatic or produce subtle symptoms such as cough. Liver and lung are the most common sites of infection. Multi-organ involvement has also been reported.^{1 2} Surgical resection is the treatment of choice; however, when surgery is not feasible due to obstacles such as extent of disease, a 2-year imidazole-based regimen is opted.³

Figure 2 A section of CT scanning of the abdomen illustrating the cysts over liver and spleen.

Learning points

- ▶ Pulmonary hydatidosis must be considered in differential diagnosis of multiple well-shaped cystic lesions of the lung.
- ▶ Pulmonary hydatidosis may be associated with multi-organ involvement of hydatid cyst.
- ▶ Lung hydatidosis is not confined to rural areas and habitants of urban areas may develop the disease upon exposure to domestic animals primarily dog feces or contaminated food and water.

Competing interests None.

Patient consent Obtained.

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