

IMAGES IN HAEMATOLOGY

Splenosis peritonei



A 21-year-old man was referred to our institution for investigation of the nature of three distinct abdominal masses detected with an ultrasound scan performed for the occurrence of an episode of abdominal pain. A computerized tomographic scan showed these masses to have a maximum diameter of 3 cm. They were round and were at distant sites in the abdomen, were eventually considered to be demonstrative of a malignant lymphoma (top).

However, from the history, we learned that the patient was a mild beta-thalassaemia carrier and had undergone splenectomy for a traumatic splenic rupture when he was 2 years old. Suspecting that the abdominal masses could represent ectopic areas of splenic tissue, we then performed hepatosplenic scintigraphy with Tc^{99m} . This showed increased uptake in the three masses (bottom), confirming the final diagnosis of splenosis peritonei.

This condition is a rare consequence of peritoneal dissemination of spleen tissue after its traumatic rupture. In the present case, the growth of splenic tissue could be favoured by the mild chronic haemolysis due to the thalassaemic status. In conclusion, splenosis peritonei should be considered in the differential diagnosis of abdominal masses in splenectomized patients.

¹Dipartimento di Oncologia ed Ematologia and ²Dipartimento per Immagini, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Modena, Italy

STEPHANO LUMINARI¹
MARIA DE SANTIS²
ALESSANDRA CASOLO²
MASSIMO FEDERICO¹