

Microfilariasis of the breast mimicking malignancy

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ABSTRACT

We report a 65-year-old female who presented with a 3.5x3 cm retro-areolar lump of the right breast with associated right axillary lymphadenopathy, mimicking breast cancer. Mammography showed a well-defined mass in the central quadrant of the right breast. Fine needle aspiration cytology from the breast lump demonstrated many microfilariae of *Wuchereria bancrofti*.

Key words: *Microfilariasis, aspiration biopsy, breast lump*

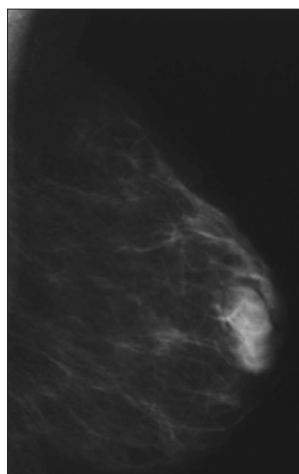


Figure 1: Mammography of the right breast (mediolateral oblique view) showing a well-defined mass in the central quadrant without any microcalcification

A 65-year-old female from Bihar presented with a complaint of a painless lump in the right breast for the last one year. On examination, a 3.5 × 3 cm firm, mobile, retroareolar lump was found in the right breast, along with a 1 × 1 cm single, firm, mobile lymph node in the right axilla. No skin change, nipple retraction, or *peau d'orange* was seen. Mammography showed a well-defined mass in the central quadrant of the right breast [Figure 1].



Figure 2: Photomicrograph showing a microfilaria of *Wuchereria bancrofti* with rounded anterior and tapered posterior ends, in the background of inflammatory cells (MGG ×40)

A clinical suspicion of breast carcinoma was considered, but fine-needle aspiration cytology (FNAC) from the lump revealed numerous sheathed microfilariae of *Wuchereria bancrofti* with rounded anterior and tapering posterior ends with elongated terminal nuclei, in the background of inflammatory cells [Figure 2]. No malignant cells were identified. FNAC from the right axillary lymph node showed reactive lymphocytosis. A midnight peripheral blood sample failed to show any microfilaria, even after diethylcarbamazine citrate (DEC) provocation. A diagnosis of occult microfilariasis of the right breast was made.

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