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Fathinul Fikri, A S; Noordzij, W

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Image of the Month

Perirectal metachronous recurrence of the hepatocellular carcinoma in the rectum on the ¹¹C choline PET–CT

A.S Fathinul Fikri^{1,*} and W. Noordzij²

¹Universiti Putra Malaysia, TransMI laboratory, Department of Nuclear Imaging, Teaching Hospital University Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia and ²University Medical Center Groningen, Medical Imaging Center – Department of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging, Groningen, the Netherlands

*For reprints and all correspondence: Fathinul Fikri A.S. Universiti Putra Malaysia, TransMI laboratory, Department of Nuclear Imaging, Teaching Hospital University Putra Malaysia, 43400 Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia.

E-mail: ahmadsaadff@gmail.com

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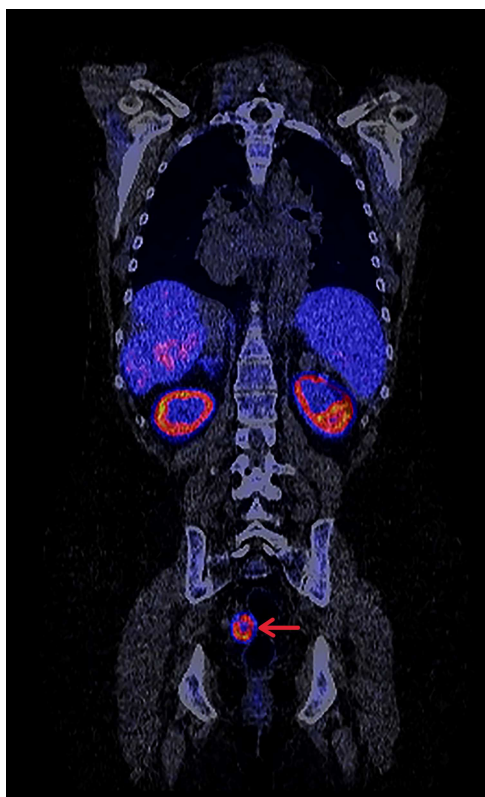


Figure 1.

A 48-year-old female presented with a history of multicentric hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC). She had a complete tumour removal via local excision and radiofrequency ablation without tumour recurrence. On follow-up, she underwent ¹¹C choline positron emission



Figure 2.

tomography-computed tomography (PET-CT) for tumour restaging, given the raised serum alfa-fetoprotein (AFP). Fused axial and coronal ¹¹C choline PET–CT showed an ¹¹C choline-avid mass (SUVmax: 17.9 g/dl) in the right upper perirectal region (arrowed) (Fig. 1). An enhanced, contrasted axial CT image confirmed the presence of an exophytic rectal wall mass with an indistinct tumour-rectal fat plane at the 11 o'clock position (arrowed) (Fig. 2). The anterior resection of the upper rectum and end-to-end anastomosis was performed. Solid fields of polygonal cells met the hepatoid aspect, in the fibrous stroma with an invasion of the muscularis propria of the rectal wall (multiple arrows). Tumour cells had polymorph nuclei, chromatine and eosinophilic granular cytoplasm. Immunohistochemistry showed expression of arginase, hepar-1 and BSEP, typical for hepatic origin (Fig. 3). A perirectal metachronous HCC in the rectum is exceedingly

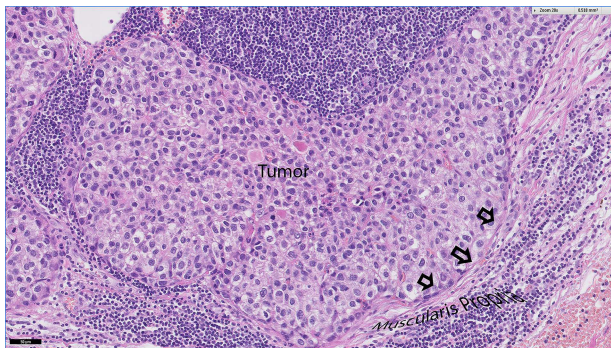


Figure 3.

rare, which may be rendered inconspicuous on conventional imaging studies. In this case, the ^{11}C choline was an important marker in underpinning the proliferation of the phospholipids in the cell membranes of the tumour. It is hypothesized that, based on the histology finding that the tumour epicentre was located deep in the

subserosa, the hepatofugal portal or inferior vena cava dissemination of the primary HCC was the likely mode of the tumour spread.

Conflict of interest statement

No conflict of interest.

Funding

No sources of funding.

Ethical approval

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for the information to be included in our manuscript. His information has been de-identified to the best of our ability to protect his privacy.

Author contributions

Each author participated in writing the manuscript and all agreed to accept equal responsibility for the accuracy of the content of the paper.