

Uncovering a Rare Case of Intravenous Catheter Migration in a Port-a-Cath for Chemotherapy: A Radiological Incidental Finding

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Abstract

Port-a-Cath (PAC) catheters are commonly used in cancer patients for delivering chemotherapy. Though generally safe, catheter migration can occur and lead to serious complications. We present a rare case of a Port-a-Cath catheter migration incidentally discovered during a follow-up CT scan.

Keywords: Port-a-Cath; Chemotherapy; Catheter Migration; Intravenous Catheter; CT

Introduction and Case Presentation

During a follow-up CT scan for a 52-year-old patient with metastatic breast cancer, a Port-a-Cath catheter was detected in the left arm, correctly positioned in the left internal jugular vein and inserted into the superior vena cava. However, the catheter extended beyond the superior vena cava and reached the right hepatic vein, indicating a rare intravenous catheter migration.

Discussion

Intravenous catheter migration is a serious complication of Port-a-Cath catheters that can result in complications such as deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism [1]. In our case, the catheter was noticed to extend beyond the superior vena cava and reach the right hepatic vein, which is a rare intravenous catheter migration (Figure 1).

Several factors can contribute to intravenous catheter migration, including incorrect catheter placement, spontaneous migration, patient movement, or catheter manipulation during insertion or removal. Patients with advanced cancer or who have undergone prior thoracic or abdominal surgeries are at increased risk for catheter migration.

The presented case highlights the importance of timely detection of catheter migration, as delayed recognition can cause serious harm to the patient.

Diagnostic imaging, including ultrasound, radiography, and computed tomography, are useful for detecting intravenous catheter migration. Ultrasound is a valuable tool for real-time imaging and detecting catheter migration during insertion or removal. Radiography is

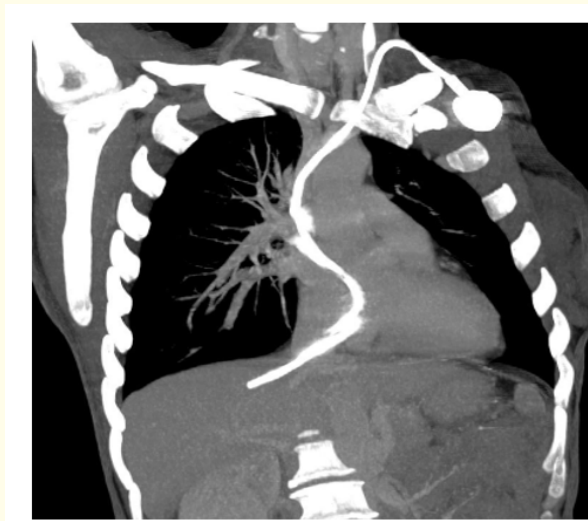


Figure 1a



Figure 1b

Figure 1: (a): CT oblique coronal, (b): 3D reconstruction showing the catheter reaching the right hepatic vein.

useful for identifying catheter tip position and detecting any dislocation or migration. Computed tomography provides detailed images and is useful for detecting catheter migration beyond the superior vena cava [2].

Conclusion

Intravenous catheter migration in Port-a-Cath catheters is a rare but serious complication that can have serious consequences for cancer patients. The importance of diagnostic imaging in detecting catheter migration is underscored by this case. Clinicians must be mindful of risk factors and take measures to minimize the risk of catheter migration, such as checking catheter position regularly and using appropriate insertion techniques.

This case underscores the importance of timely detection of intravenous catheter migration and the critical role of diagnostic imaging in its diagnosis. We hope this case will serve as a reminder to clinicians of the importance of regular monitoring and vigilance for catheter migration in their patients undergoing chemotherapy.

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Conflict of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest relevant to this article.

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