



AMSER Case of the Month: March 2019

73 YO male presenting with left hip pain

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Patient Presentation

- HPI: 73 year old male presented with left hip pain status post fall 7 days prior, with acute worsening of mental status prompting presentation to ED
- PMH: Type II diabetes mellitus, COPD, hypertension
- PSH: s/p total arthroplasty of left hip, date unknown
- Physical exam identified crepitus and skin necrosis over left hip



Pertinent Labs

- Lactic acid 4.3
- Na 125
- HCO3 13
- BUN 74
- Creatinine 3.36
- WBC 21 (23% bands)



What Imaging Should We Order?



Select the applicable ACR Appropriateness Criteria

Variant 8: Clinical examination suggesting crepitus. Suspected soft-tissue gas. First study.				
Radiologic Procedure	Rating	Comments	RRL*	
X-ray area of interest	9		Varies	
		This procedure may be appropriate but		
CT area of interest with IV contrast	5	there was disagreement among panel members on the appropriateness rating as defined by the panel's median rating. X- ray is the preferred initial study. Contrast is preferred for evaluation of possible concomitant soft-tissue abscess.	Varies	
CT area of interest without IV contrast	5	This procedure may be appropriate but there was disagreement among panel members on the appropriateness rating as defined by the panel's median rating. X- ray is the preferred initial study. This procedure may be appropriate if there is contraindication to contrast.	Varies	
CT area of interest without and with IV contrast	1		Varies	
MRI area of interest without IV contrast	1		О	
MRI area of interest without and with IV contrast	1		0	
US area of interest	1		О	
Rating Scale: 1,2,3 Usually not appropriate; 4,5,6 May be appropriate; 7,8,9 Usually appropriate			*Relative Radiation Level	

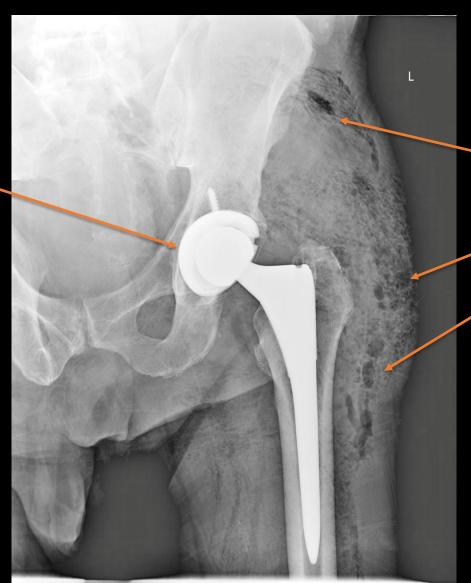


Findings: (unlabeled)



Findings: (labeled)

Total hip arthroplasty hardware intact, no evidence of fracture or dislocation



Large quantity of gas within the soft tissues of the left hip, possibly due to gas-forming infection or penetrating injury

<u>Variant 9:</u> Initial radiographs showing soft-tissue gas in absence of puncture wound.

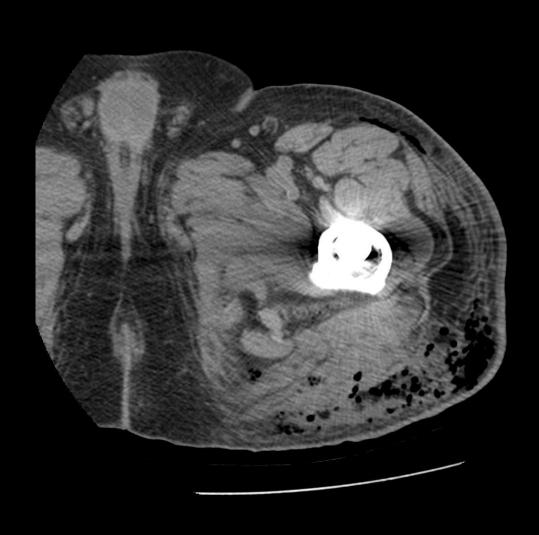
Radiologic Procedure	Rating	Comments	RRL*
CT area of interest without IV contrast	6	CT is useful due to rapid acquisition and high sensitivity.	Varies
CT area of interest with IV contrast	5	This procedure may be appropriate but there was disagreement among panel members on the appropriateness rating as defined by the panel's median rating. CT is useful due to rapid acquisition and high sensitivity.	Varies
MRI area of interest without IV contrast	5	This procedure may be appropriate but there was disagreement among panel members on the appropriateness rating as defined by the panel's median rating.	О
MRI area of interest without and with IV contrast	5	This procedure may be appropriate but there was disagreement among panel members on the appropriateness rating as defined by the panel's median rating.	О
CT area of interest without and with IV contrast	1		Varies
US area of interest	1		О
Rating Scale: 1,2,3 Usually not appropriate; 4,5,6 M	Iay be appropriate; 7	,8,9 Usually appropriate	*Relative Radiation Level

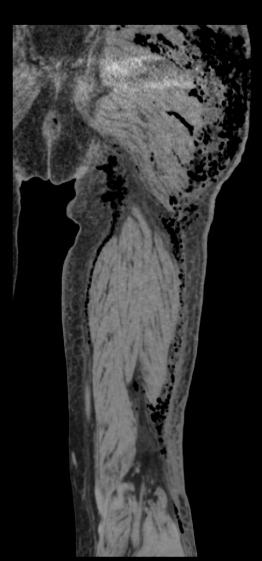
Findings (unlabeled)



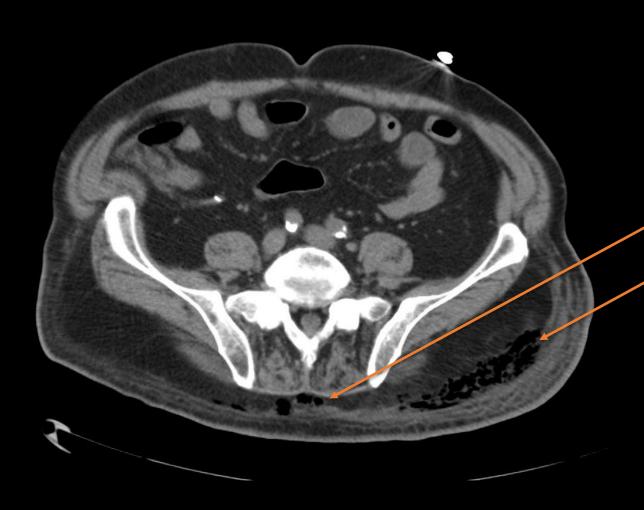


Findings (unlabeled)





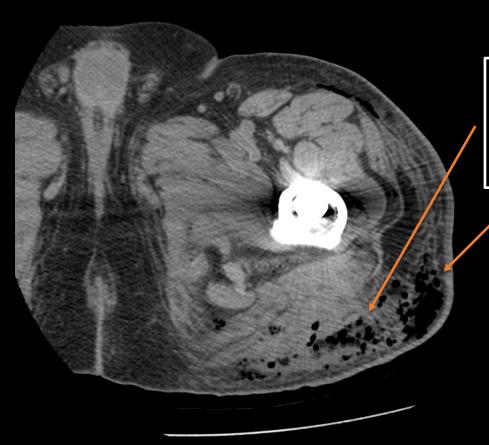
Findings: (labeled)



Extensive subcutaneous air in the soft tissues in both gluteal muscles and in the subcutaneous fat of the left buttock extending into left upper thigh



Findings: (labeled)



Free air in the subcutaneous tissues and in gluteus maximus muscles



Free air in the subcutaneous tissues and in the posterior compartment extending down to the level of the knee

Final Dx:

Septic shock secondary to necrotizing fasciitis

- Multiple surgical debridements and broad spectrum antibiotic coverage were ultimately unsuccessful, with continued spread of infection
 - Spread as far down as mid-calf, up to mid-back and around left lateral abdominal wall at time of final surgery
- Two days after presentation, patient passed away



Case Discussion

- Necrotizing fasciitis
 - Infection of deep soft tissues with destruction of muscle fascia and subcutaneous fat
 - Rapidly progressing, high mortality
 - caused by various species of Gram-positive cocci (Staphylococcus aureus, Streptococcus pyogenes, and enterococci), Gram-negative rods (Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa), and anaerobes (Bacteroides and Clostridium species)
- Risk factors
 - Penetrating trauma or skin breach
 - Blunt trauma (ex: fall, as was the case in this patient)
 - Immunosuppression, including diabetes (another risk factor in this patient)
- Clinical and laboratory findings
 - Erythema, edema, pain out of proportion, fever, crepitus, skin necrosis
 - Leukocytosis, acidosis, hyponatremia, elevated lactate, elevated creatinine



Case Discussion

- Treatment of necrotizing fasciitis requires early recognition and surgical intervention for debridement of necrotic tissue, along with coverage with broad-spectrum antibiotics
- Initial imaging modality if presence of soft tissue gas is suspected: x-ray area of interest
- Radiographic imaging should NOT delay surgical exploration when crepitus is present or patient's clinical status is rapidly deteriorating
- CT is more useful than MRI for detection of gas in soft tissues, and is the preferred imaging modality after initial radiograph demonstrates possible air in soft tissue

Patient is septic, dehydrated, acidotic, or immunosuppressed Patient has organ dysfunction Appropriate follow-up is unavailable (Laboratory Risk Indicator for Necrotizing Fasciitis score ≥ 8; class 4, 3, and some class 2 infections [Tables 1 and 4]) Inpatient management Complete blood count, C-reactive protein testing, liver and kidney function testing Blood culture for severe infection and in immunocompromised Culture of aspirate from advancing edge of cellulitis or abscess Imaging for suspected necrotizing fasciitis or if no response to initial treatment of cellulitis or abscess Tissue biopsy from advancing edge of cellulitis after debridement of bites or necrotizing fasciitis Correction of fluid/electrolyte/acid-base imbalance Empiric broad-spectrum antibiotics followed by culture-specific narrow-spectrum agents (include MRSA coverage; Tables 5 and 6) Is surgical consultation required? (Purulence or suspected necrotizing fasciitis, gas gangrene, or deep bites involving joint?) Culture-specific antibiotics for 7 to Abscess: incision and drainage, continue 4 days; change to oral agents if antimicrobials active against MRSA clinical improvement is noted and Necrotizing fasciitis: debridement, continue oral administration is tolerated polymicrobial coverage Bites, gas gangrene: debridement, antimicrobials (Tables 5 and 6) Change to oral agents if clinical improvement is noted, oral administration is tolerated, and drainage/debridement is complete Total antibiotic course is 7 to 14 days, or 6 weeks if joint is involved AAFP: Inpatient Management of a Patient With

Patient presents with severe or uncontrolled infection despite outpatient antibiotics and drainage

Skin and Soft Tissue Infection

References:

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