

An Unusual Presentation of Ewing's Sarcoma of Soft Tissues of the Face

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Conflict of interest: Nil

Abstract:

Background: Ewing sarcoma occurs in bone and soft tissues with aggressive nature. It is an example of translocation positive sarcomas. Though genetically it is a simple disease, but with a specific neomorphic-potential therapeutic target. Its carcinogenic role was undoubtedly explained many decades ago. It has the property to micro metastasize and very poor prognosis. The present standard treatment consisted of giving multiple cycles of systemic therapy in addition to local treatment. But both of these modalities cause extreme morbidity and psychological trauma to the patients.

Aim of the Study: To present an uncommon condition of Primary Ewing's Sarcoma in a pediatric patient's facial soft tissues by confirming it by clinical, radiological and histopathological report.

Materials: A 14 year old female patients presented with a single 4 x 4 cm swelling on right cheek area, no scars, sinuses, or dilated veins, skin above swelling is normal. On palpation a firm, non-tender swelling was felt with no local rise of temperature. Swelling was seen extending 1cm below the right medial canthus to adjacent ala of right nostril to angle of mouth on right side. Examination of the nose ears and throat were normal. No palpable cervical lymphadenopathy.

Results: Ultrasound revealed a well-defined hypo echoic lesion with peripheral vascularity deep in subcutaneous planes in right cheek superficial to right maxillary bone. On Doppler study there was no intra lesional vascularity observed. On MRI- T2 hyper intense/ FLAIR hyper intense, T1 isointense contents was found in subcutaneous plane of right maxillary region with no bony involvement. Excision biopsy was done and sent for HPE.

Conclusions: Ewing sarcoma of soft tissue is an uncommon malignant disease belonging to the ESFT group. The Ewing's sarcoma of soft tissues is the second most common bone malignancy in pediatric individuals. On HPE it is small, round, blue cells with large spherical nuclei and indistinct cytoplasmic borders. This Ewing soft tissue tumor is most aggressive and most recurrent tumor.

Keywords: Pediatric age, Ewing's sarcoma, soft tissues, bone tumours and morbidity.

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Introduction

Ewing sarcoma was first described by Dr James Ewing in 1921 in which he described it as a diffuse hemangioendothelioma of bone where its etiology is unknown. (1) In the (ESFT) extra skeletal Ewing tumour accounts for 20% -30%. First case of Extra-skeletal Ewing (EES) was reported by Angervall and Enzinger in 1975. [1] EES accounts for 0.4 per million with bimodal presentation <5 yr and > 35 yrs without any sex or race predominance unlike Ewing's of long bone. [2] EES is a rapidly growing

mass which can develop within soft tissue of any anatomical region but most commonly upper thigh, buttocks, upper arm and shoulders, maxillofacial region. [2] This family of Ewing tumours characteristically derived from neural crest cells and mainly demonstrates 11 and 22(q24;q12) which leads to fusion of EWS and FLI-1 genes and thus production of oncogenic transcription factor resulting in cell proliferation. [3] Symptoms of EES depend on primary site where it occurs. ESS can be

diagnosed with imaging however the imaging characteristics are non-specific for ESS. Ultrasonography, CT, MRI each imaging has its own specific indications. [4] Confirmative diagnosis of this ESS will be histopathological diagnosis of specimen either by CT guided needle biopsy or by specimen after surgical resection. [5] Initially EES was treated same as that of any other soft tissue tumor but later according to NCCN(National Comprehensive Cancer Network) the treatment modality has been changed to local treatment i. e, surgery and/or radiotherapy plus chemotherapy. Previous studies confirmed that wide surgical resection increases overall survival rate of patients. Ewings sarcoma is a rare, malignant tumor with micro metastases. [1, 2] Most of the patients are lost due to distant systemic metastases in micro form. More than 90% of the patients die from disseminated disease. [3] Ewings sarcoma is usually seen in the second decade of the life but patients in infant period and late life; in the eighth decade of life also it is reported. [4] Ewings sarcoma is reported in every body parts of human beings. [5]

A multimodality approach is recognized in the treatment of Ewings sarcoma following collaborative trials all over the world which has shown an improved survival rate among these patients. [6] Metastatic disease of Ewings sarcoma is noted in 20 to 25% of the patients. [7] Among the metastatic deposits 80 to 83% occurs in the lungs. [8] Ewings sarcoma recurs after treatment in 30 to 40 % of the patients with their primary increasing to 60 to 80%. [9, 10] Relapse of the disease was reported mostly from systemic sites (70 to 90%), [11] which are followed by combined relapse and lastly local relapse in 11 to 15%. [12] The local recurrence cases respond better than the systemic recurrence patients. [13] The unique feature of Ewings sarcoma is that it carries a balanced translocation. In nearly 85–95% of these patients, the rearrangement fuses the Ewing sarcoma breakpoint region 1 gene (EWSR1) on chromosome 22 to the friend of leukemia virus integration site 1 gene (FLI1) on chromosome 11 t(11;22), (q24;q12), [13] Thus the EWSR1-FLI1 fusion product functions as an oncoprotein that is both necessary and presumably sufficient for tumorigenesis. [14] Hence inactivation of EWSR1-FLI1 function is necessary for effective therapy but it is clinically not a must, as shown by effectiveness of non-targeted chemotherapy in a substantial proportion of patients with localized

tumors. [16] Certain aspects of the disease are still not explained such as the cryptic cell of origin, phenomenon of oncogene addiction as well as oncogene plasticity, distinct molecular activities and clinical relevance of fusion proteins in EwS, CIC-rearranged sarcoma, sarcoma with BCOR genetic alterations, and round cell sarcoma with EWSR1-non-ETS fusions (all together formerly known as “Ewing-like sarcoma”. [17] Keeping these advancements in understanding the biological activity behind the pathogenesis of Ewings sarcoma the present uncommon case of Ewings sarcoma of soft tissues of the face of a child aged 14 years is being reported.

Materials:

A 14 year-old female child attended the department of ENT with presenting complaints of a swelling in the right cheek area for the past 3 months. The child was initially treated at Government ENT hospital in Vishakhapatnam. It was characterized by a rapidly progressive swelling in the absence of precipitating or associative influences. There were no complaints of nasal obstruction, bleeding, impaired eye sight, breathing or swallowing problems, loss of smell, loss of appetite or loss of weight. The swelling was characterized by rapidly progression with sometimes associated with pain. She was otherwise well without any other constitutional symptoms. No significant medical history and family history. No history of addiction to drugs or snuff. There was no history of consanguineous marriage among the child's parents.

She was well oriented, afebrile, heart sounds were heard; CVS-S1,S2 +; Lungs presented with normal vesicular breath sounds; per abdomen was soft, no organomegaly was observed; no pedal edema or generalized lymphadenopathy were present. On inspection a single 4 x 4 cm swelling on right cheek area, no scars, sinuses, or dilated veins, skin above swelling is normal. On palpation a firm, non-tender swelling was felt with no local rise of temperature. Swelling was seen extending 1cm below the right medial canthus to adjacent to ala of right nostril to angle of mouth on right side. Nose examination: Showed on anterior rhinoscopy septum in the midline, floor of nasal cavity normal, and lateral wall normal. Oral cavity and oropharynx examination: Showed normal findings, no swelling or development in alveolar region. No palpable cervical lymphadenopathy. (Fig 1)



Figure 1: Swelling on the Face

Fig 1: Showing the Pre-Operative Photo of the Patient.

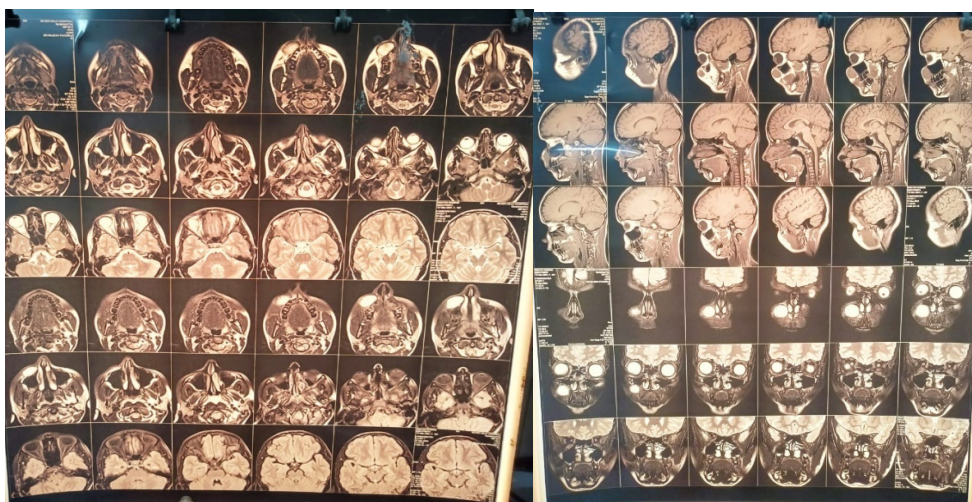


Figure 2: Showing the MRI Imaging of the Patient

Investigations:

Ultrasound revealed a well-defined hypo echoic lesion with peripheral vascularity deep in subcutaneous planes in right cheek superficial to right maxillary bone. On Doppler study there was no intra lesional vascularity observed. On MRI- T2 hyper intense/ FLAIR hyper intense, T1 isointense contents was found in subcutaneous plane of right maxillary region with no bony involvement.

Surgical Procedure: Surgery was performed under general anesthesia. Approach was both external and sublabial. Lesion was well circumscribed and

confined to the soft tissues of buccal areas. Lesion was excised in total and sent for HPE.

Gross specimen was measuring 4x4 cm covered with Fibro fatty tissue. Microscopic examination revealed small round cells with tumor cells arranged in groups. The cells had round nucleus, inconspicuous nucleoli and scant cytoplasm.

Immuno-staining was performed, with tumor cell positive for CK, NKX2.2, and CD99. Later the patient was started on chemotherapy with alternating of vincristine-doxorubicin, cyclophosphamide and ifosfamide- etoposide cycles.

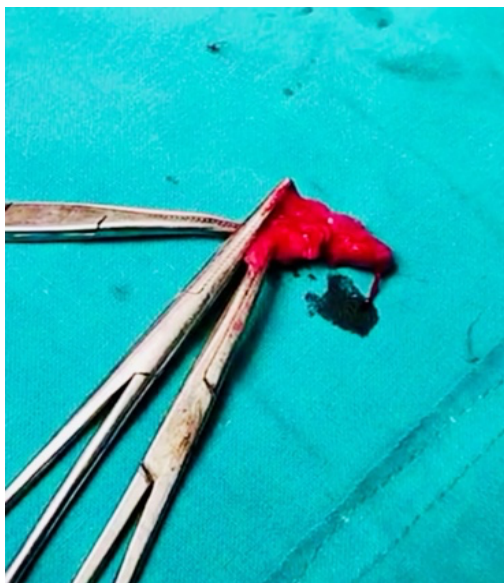
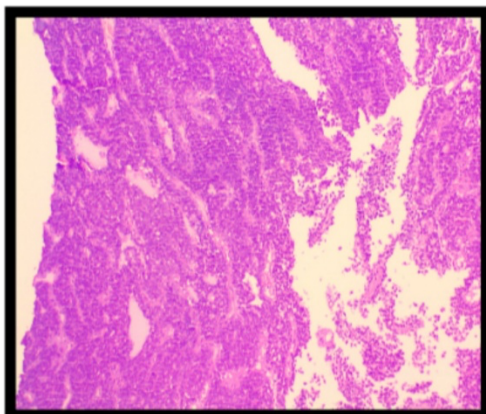


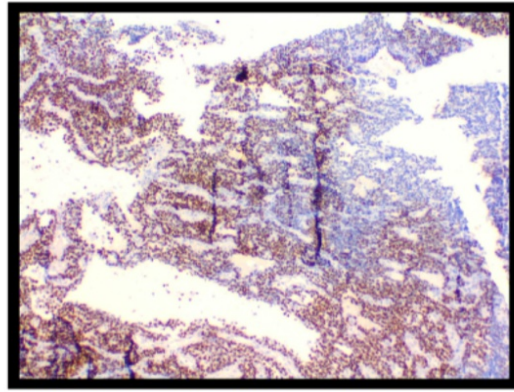
Fig 3: Showing the intra-operative picture

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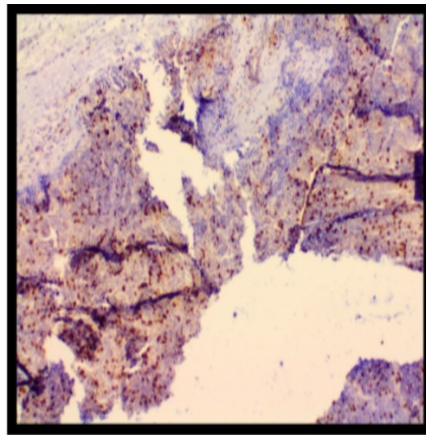
H&E

Figure 4:



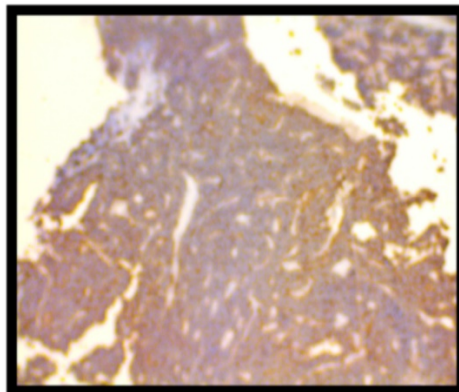
NKX2.2 (NX2/294)

Figure 5:



Ki67 (BH360)

Figure 6:



CD99 (EP8)

Figure 7:

Fig: 4, 5 6 and 7 Showing the Immuno-histochemistry microscopy pictures.



Fig 8: Showing the Post-Operative Picture

Discussion:

Extra skeletal Ewing sarcoma (EES) is an uncommon tumor affecting soft tissues and especially the facial soft tissues. 0.2 to 0.3% of Ewing's Sarcoma cases occur in the maxillofacial region especially involving the maxilla, mandible, and zygoma. [18] In the present case, it presented as a swelling within soft tissue. The differential diagnosis for such a painless, rapidly enlarging, non odontogenic mass usually thought of mucocele, and salivary gland tumor. ESFT group typically represents as a single entity with common antigenic profiles, cytogenic aberrations and proto-oncogene expression. [19] Symptoms of EES depend on primary as well as metastatic site which accounts for 25% of all cases. [20] Diagnosis of EES by means of radiological modality is non-specific. However they can play a role in staging, treatment monitoring and surveillance of EES. [21] With Ultrasonography lesions appear as heterogenous masses of low echogenicity. On Doppler the tumor vascularity and intra-tumor blood flow signals could be assessed. On CT scan it appears as sharply demarcated mass with similar intensity as that of surrounding muscles with calcification. [22]

However calcification is reported in 10% of cases. On MRI EES shows low intensity signals on T1 imaging and high intensity signals on T2 imaging. This MRI is also helpful for restaging prior to local control when neo-adjuvant chemotherapy given. Gerth et al reported that PET/CT is 87% sensitive and 97% specific for detection of distant metastasis. [23] Overall diagnosis or confirmative

diagnosis was done by USG guided biopsy or gross specimen for histopathological examination. [23] On HPE Ewing's sarcoma appears as round, small, monomorphic blue cells which have spherical nuclei with indistinct cytoplasmic borders. [24] These cells have less extracellular matrix with low mitotic activity. Immuno-histochemistry studies using a spectrum of markers are more useful than a single marker as the specificity was improved. [25] The markers included CD99 antigen which is highly sensitive but not specific, S-100 protein and Synaptophysin (both are neural proteins), FLI1 which was recently discovered. [26] DNA binding transcription factor was found to be more specific than CD99. [27] Usually histopathology and immune-histochemistry were enough for the diagnosis but in certain cases additional genetic analysis was required. [28] It includes RT PCR or FISH in which two most common translocations were identified. As per National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) local treatment consisted of surgery and /or radiotherapy in addition to systemic chemotherapy.

The overall 5- year survival rate was found to have improved from 5-10% to more than 65 % following the administration of systemic chemotherapy; also helped in to decrease the recurrence rate. Presently the regimens in use are alternating of vincristine-doxorubicin, cyclophosphamide and ifosfamide-etoposide cycles for every 3 weeks. For localized lesion such as the present case both the surgery and radiotherapy are very useful. Even though the Ewing's sarcoma is radiosensitive local excision of the lesion has been proved to be giving better

results. [29] At present definitive radiotherapy recommended for inoperable cases was of 54- 55 Gy. The Ewings sarcoma metastases usually to the lungs and the lungs are treated as similar to the primary tumor protocol. [30]

The 5 year survival rate for Ewings sarcoma was reported as 42% in localized but with metastatic disease it is 15%. In Ewings sarcoma affecting Maxillo-facial region the prognosis is better than other sites. [31] A structured proforma was designed to record the clinical details, which included age, gender, presenting symptoms, site of the tumor, radiological findings (chest X-ray, computerized tomogram (CT), positron emission tomogram (PET) scan), and diagnostic investigations (ultrasound or computed tomography (CT)-guided biopsy), pathological, immunohistochemical, and molecular characteristics [t(11:22) (q24;q12)] of the tumor, and other laboratory investigations and treatment modalities. The patients were categorized according to their age (>20, 20-40, and <40 years) and based on the primary site of the tumor. Histopathological and immunohistochemical slides belonging to all the study cases were retrieved and analyzed. IHC markers of other small round blue cell tumors like CD-45, Desmin, Myogenin, SAT-B2, etc. were done to differentiate ES from them. Molecular testing by NGS was performed for a few of the cases. The grading and staging of excision specimens were based on the FNCLCC (French Federation of Cancer Centers Sarcoma Group) grading system. Variables following normal distribution were expressed as mean (standard deviation), and variables that followed skewed distribution were expressed as median.

Conclusions:

Ewing sarcoma of soft tissue is an uncommon malignant disease belonging to the ESFT group. The Ewings sarcoma of soft tissues is the second most common bone malignancy in pediatric individuals. Histologically it is small, round, blue cells with large spherical nuclei and indistinct cytoplasmic borders. MRI and CT are useful in staging and for follow up and recurrence. Mainstay of treatment lies first in diagnosing and differentiating it from other soft tissue tumours. Because of rarity and involvement of soft tissues and lack of literature this EES poses a diagnostic and therapeutic challenge. In the above said case report female with swelling in cheek area has been diagnosed with EES based on its hisopathological features of small round cells and immunohistochemistry marker positive for CD99, CK, NKX2.2. Overall for proper diagnosis, successful management and surveillance of recurrence of EES a multidisciplinary team is required.

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