

Plasmacytoma of the Breast in a Developing Community: Case Reports

Wilson I B Onuigbo*

Department of Pathology, Medical Foundation and Clinic, 8 Nsukka Lane, Enugu 400001, Nigeria

***Corresponding Author:** Wilson I B Onuigbo, Department of Pathology, Medical Foundation and Clinic, 8 Nsukka Lane, Enugu 400001, Nigeria.

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Abstract

As its name implies, the plasmacytoma classically shows malignant plasma cells with typical eccentrically situated nucleus as well as a lighter staining cytoplasm abutting on it. A personal review of the accumulated biopsy records led to the documentation of 3 local mammary examples aged between 17 and 50 years (average 33 years) whereas the literature average was 48.7 years.

Keywords: Plasma; Cell; Plasmacytoma; Breast, Nigeria

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Introduction

In his classical textbook, Winston Evans [1] was specific: "The plasma cell is a more or less oval element, larger than a lymphocyte because of a more abundant cytoplasm in which a round nucleus occupies an eccentric position." In this context, he figured the cells precisely.

For example, I searched the available literature with regard to the breast. The 1975 account from South Africa included an illustrative Figure from a 63-year-old Caucasoid female [2]. One or 2 cases concerned women from Israel [3], USA [4], and Italy [5]. Accordingly, three local cases are deemed worthy of documentation from Nigeria.

Investigation

A Birmingham (UK) group suggested that the establishment of a histopathology data pool facilitates epidemiological analysis [6]. As the pioneer pathologist at the Regional Pathology Laboratory, established at Enugu, a State capital city, biopsy specimens were welcomed provided that clinical details were given. The data pool consists of patients of the Igbo Ethnic Group [7].

Case Reports

These cases proved to be mammary plasmacytoma as follows:

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Case 1: EC, was a 17-year-old girl whose right breast exhibited multiple lumps of 6 months' duration. She attended the distant Holy Rosary Hospital, at Nsukka in Enugu State Nigeria. At death, biopsy was carried out and the lesion was queried as Burkitt's lymphoma. On personal microscopy, plasmacytoma was diagnosed.

Case 2: OM, a 32-year-old woman, whose right breast showed a lump. This had been present for 2 years. It was at near Enugu Hospital that the mass was biopsied and submitted to me as a case of fibroadenoma. Microscopy personally revealed plasmacytoma.

Case 3: NV was a 50-year-old woman when she attended a distant Owerri hospital in Imo State Nigeria. The lesion was on the left breast. It had been present for an unknown duration. The biopsy was submitted and queried as cancer. However, plasmacytoma was personally found microscopically.

Discussion

A distinct difference in age appeared. Whereas the literature series showed a mean age of 48.7 years (2-5), the Igbo (Nigeria) figure was 33 years.

In terms of follow-up, there was a natural difference. Thus, documentation of the literature cases extended to what transpired after the biopsies. On the contrary, the present data did not extend beyond the perpetrating period. Any explanatory information has to be obtained through future comparative studies.

Incidentally, two cases came from outside the State Capital City, Enugu, Nigeria. This is an indicator of distant hospitals seeking laboratory assistance. This is contrary to the debate in the UK concerning whether a distant hospital could profit from a central laboratory [8]. Elsewhere, the author's team has debunked this apprehension [9,10].

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