Growing fat tissue after grafting for dural sealing

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PII: \$1878-8750(22)01634-5

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wneu.2022.11.082

Reference: WNEU 19798

To appear in: World Neurosurgery

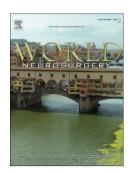
Received Date: 17 November 2022

Accepted Date: 18 November 2022

Please cite this article as: Grüter BE, Andereggen L, Growing fat tissue after grafting for dural sealing, *World Neurosurgery* (2022), doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wneu.2022.11.082.

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Growing fat tissue after grafting for dural sealing

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Number of words: 235

Number of references: 5

Number of figures: 1

Number of tables: None

Disclosure: The authors report no disclosures.

Funding: No funding was received for this work.

Competing interests None.

Ethics approval: Ethical review and approval was not required. The patient provided written informed consent to participate in this study. This work is original and has not been published elsewhere nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Abstract

We report on a young patient with a growing retroauricular benign fat tissue tumour after juvenile fat grafting for dural sealing of a placed ventriculoperitoneal shunt. The clinical images indicates fat tissue rather than a cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leak due to potential shunt malfunction suspected on plain radiography. Human adipose tissue is a source of stem cells that can replicate rather than undergo necrosis, in particular when transplanted during development.

Clinical Images

A man in his mid forties was referred by his barber for a growing painless retroauricular swelling. The patient's history was uneventful except for preterm birth with perinatal intraventricular hemorrhage. A ventriculoperitoneal shunt was subsequently placed due to progressive ventriculomegaly at the age of three years. ¹ Nine years later, shunt revision became necessary, and the parietal burr hole was sealed with an abdominal fat graft to prevent cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leakage. ^{2,3}

Clinical examination revealed a soft, fluctuating resistance. Computer tomography showed a hypodense mass at 110 Hounsfield units, indicating fat tissue rather than a CSF leak (Fig.1 A) due to potential shunt malfunction on plain radiography (Fig.1 B). Surgery confirmed the presence of a benign fat tissue tumour (Fig.1 C) without shunt discontinuation.

growing fat tissue after infantile fat grafting for dural repair is an uncommon phenomenon. Human adipose tissue is a source of stem cells with neovascularization and angiogenesis being vital processes in the regenerative fate of fat tissue,⁴ that might replicate rather than undergo necrosis, in particular when transplanted during development.^{5,6}

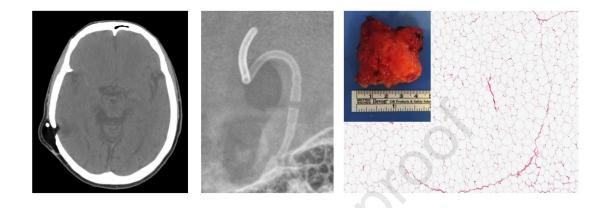
Figure 1 Parietal fat tissue tumor mimicking cerebrospinal fluid leakage

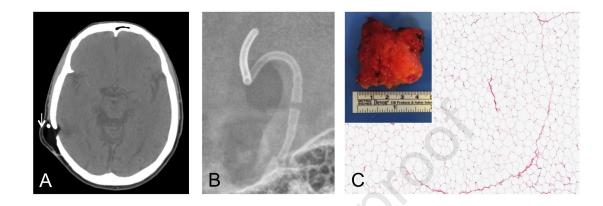
(A) Axial head CT-scan depicting a hypodense mass located over the burr hole comprising the shunt. Note that the signal density is similar to the adjacent subcutaneous fat tissue (arrow). (B) X-ray shows a radiolucent segment of the proximal shunt close to the retroauricular burr hole. (C) Macroscopic image of the encapsulated resected benign fat tissue

tumour (inlet) with histological confirmation of the adipose tissue (HE, 2x magnification). Note the numerous capillaries in between fat vacuoles.

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Disclosure: The authors report no disclosures.

Funding: No funding was received for this work.

Competing interests None.

Ethics approval: Ethical review and approval was not required. The patient provided written informed consent to participate in this study. This work is original and has not been published elsewhere nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.