



Subungual Squamous Cell Carcinoma - A Missed Diagnosis

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Clinical Image

Subungual squamous cell carcinoma is a rare entity. These tumours may present with nail plate discolouration or deformity, paronychia, ulceration and pain, usually affecting a single digit. Common mistaken diagnosis' are paronychia infection, pyogenic granuloma, subungual haematoma, onychomycosis and chronic osteomyelitis. Whilst it is a slow growing low-grade malignancy, delay in management may lead to osseous involvement and metastasis. Suspicion should be raised by nail deformity or paronychia infections that do not improve with treatment, as well as bleeding and ulceration. It is most commonly seen in males after the 5th decade of life. Diagnosis is achieved with biopsy for histology analysis. Surgical management options include excision (marginal or wide excision) and distal phalanx amputation, whilst radiotherapy has been reported as demonstrating low recurrence rates if used as primary treatment.



Figure:

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