



THE ROLE OF DIFFUSION-WEIGHTED MRI IN THE CHARACTERIZATION OF MUSCULOSKELETAL SOFT-TISSUE TUMORS

Essay

*Submitted for partial fulfillment of the Master degree
in Radiodiagnosis*

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2016



وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ
تَكُن تَعْلَمُ
وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا

صدق الله العظيم

سورة النساء الآية



First and above all thanks to **ALLAH**.

First and foremost, praise and thanks are to Allah, the most merciful and compassionate, who permitted the completion of this piece of work.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to **Prof. Dr. Amany Mohamed Rashad Abdel-Aziz**, Professor of Radio diagnosis, Faculty of Medicine- Ain Shams University, for his remarkable effort, great experience had added much to my knowledge, his great support and kind close supervision.

My most sincere gratitude is also extended to **Dr. Ayman Mohamed Ibrahim**, Assistant professor of Radio diagnosis, Faculty of Medicine- Ain Shams University, for her valuable advice, helpful suggestions and kind supervision.

Lastly but not least, I would like to thank my Mother for her support, encouragement, prayers and providing me the suitable environment for concentration and progress.

 **Mohamed Ismail Deghedy**

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List of Abbreviations

ADC	Apparent Diffusion Coefficient
AFIP	Armed Forces Institutes of Pathology
AFX	Atypical fibroxanthoma
AP	Antero-posterior
ARMS	Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma
ASPS	Alveolar soft part sarcoma
CC	Cephalocaudal
CEHs	Chronic Expanding Hematomas
CNS	Central nervous system
CPMG	Carr–Purcell–Meiboom–Gill
CSF	Cerebrospinal Fluid
DFSP	Dermatofibrosarcoma Protuberans
DSRCT	Desmoplastic small rounded cell tumor
DTI	Diffusion Tensor Imaging
DWI	Diffusion Weighted Imaging
EMC	Extraskelatal mesenchymal chondrosarcoma
EPI	Echo Planer Imaging
ERMS	Embryonal Rhabdomyosarcoma
ETL	Echo Train Length
FHT	Fibrohistiocytic tumors
fMRI	functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging
FOV	Field Of View
FSE	Fast Spin Echo
GIST	Gastrointestinal stromal tumors

List of Abbreviations (Cont...)

GU	Genito-Urinary
IMT	Inflammatory myofibroblastic tumor
IV	Intravenous
LGMFS	Low grade malignant myofibroblastic sarcoma
MFH	Malignant Fibrous Histiocytoma
MIFS	Myxo-inflammatory fibroblastic sarcoma
mm2	Square millimeter
MPG	Motion Probing Gradient
MPNST	Malignant Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumor
MPR	Multi-planar Reconstruction
MR	Magnetic Resonance
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
MSK	Musculoskeletal
NOS	Not otherwise specified
NSRBC	Non Small Round Blue Cell
OFMT	Ossifying fibromyxoid tumor
PFHT	Plexiform fibrohistiocytic tumor
PHAT	Pleomorphic hyalinizing angiectatic tumor
PIDC	Perfusion Insensitive Diffusion Coefficient
PNET	Primitive Neuroectodermal Tumor
PWI	Perfusion Weighted Imaging
RARE	Rapid Acquisition With Relaxation enhancement
RF	Radio Frequency pulse
RMS	Rhabdomyosarcoma

List of Abbreviations (Cont...)

ROI	Region Of Interest
S	second
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Spin Echo
SFT	Solitary fibrous tumor
SI	Signal Intensity
SNR	Signal-to-Noise Ratio
SPAIR	Spectral Presaturation Attenuated Inversion recovery
SRBC	Small Round Blue Cell
SSCRG	Site Specific Clinical Reference Group
SSFP	Steady State Free Precession
STIR	Short Tau Inversion Recovery
T	Tesla
T1 WI	T1 Weighted Image
T2 WI	T2 Weighted Image
TE	Echo Time
TR	Repetition Time
TSE	Turbo Spin Echo
Vs	Versus
WHO	World Health Organization
γ	Proton Gyromagnetic Ratio

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ABSTRACT

Diffusion-weighted (DW) imaging is a functional magnetic resonance (MR) imaging technique that can readily be incorporated into a routine non-contrast material-enhanced MR imaging protocol with little additional scanning time. DW imaging is based on changes in the Brownian motion of water molecules caused by tissue microstructure. The apparent diffusion coefficient (ADC) is a quantitative measure of Brownian movement: Low ADC values typically reflect highly cellular microenvironments in which diffusion is restricted by the presence of cell membranes, whereas acellular regions allow free diffusion and result in elevated ADC values. Thus, with ADC mapping, one may derive useful quantitative information regarding the cellularity of a musculoskeletal lesion using a nonenhanced technique. The role of localized DW imaging in differentiating malignant from benign osseous and soft-tissue lesions is still evolving; when carefully applied, however, this modality has proved helpful in a subset of tumor types, such as nonmyxoid soft-tissue tumors. Successful application of DW imaging in the evaluation of musculoskeletal lesions requires familiarity with potential diagnostic pitfalls that stem from technical artifacts and confounding factors unrelated to lesion cellularity. Further investigation is needed to evaluate the impact of DW imaging-ADC mapping on management and outcome in patients with musculoskeletal lesions.

Keywords: Diffusion Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Soft Tissue Neoplasms; Differential Diagnosis.

INTRODUCTION

Soft tissue tumors usually present with unspecific clinical findings, such as palpable mass, tenderness and pain and sometimes with motion impairment and are therefore easily detected on clinical examination. However, the characterization of such masses remains a challenge for the clinician, because malignancies and benign tumors as well as non-neoplastic masses following inflammation or trauma, have a similar presentation (*Andreas et al., 2007*).

MRI is the modality of choice to evaluate such masses, because of its excellent soft tissue contrast. Although there are some findings on MRI which are indicative for malignancy, such as infiltration of adjacent tissues, destruction of bones and tendons, and the size of the mass, there are no criteria available to clearly distinguish benign masses from malignancies. On the contrary some very aggressive tumors present as an encapsulated mass without surrounding edema and only minimal contrast enhancement, findings, which are in general indicative for benign processes. Thus, histopathologic work up is required for reliable characterization of soft tissue masses (*Andreas et al., 2007*).

Benign lesions are much more common than malignant lesions in daily practice. Therefore, we need diagnostic tools that

improve our diagnostic confidence and prevent unnecessary biopsies or surgeries. Diffusion-weighted imaging (DWI) is a noninvasive method for investigation of tumor histological content (**Pekcevik et al., 2015**).

DWI is an invaluable tool for identifying benign and malignant lesions in the body. It is generally hard to differentiate between benign and malignant soft tissue tumors from their signal intensities except for some soft tissue tumors that have unique MR imaging signal and localization such as lipoma, ganglion cyst etc. DWI MR has been applied to some soft tissue tumors and reported to be useful. (**Pekcevik et al., 2015**).

The tissue contrast attained using diffusion-weighted imaging (DWI) is different from that attained using conventional MR techniques. The DWI technique involves the diffusion motion of water protons in tissue, which produces different contrasts in different kinds of tissue and because of this, the procedure provides different information about diseased tissue. Recently, DWI was applied to characterize soft tissue tumors, differentiate between benign and malignant tumors, and determine treatment success in patients with sarcoma. The potential clinical application of DWI in musculoskeletal radiology is thought to be high (*Nagata et al., 2008*).

It has been reported that DWI has the potential to differentiate benign and malignant soft-tissue tumors because

malignant tumors have greater cellularity and therefore have more restricted diffusion than benign tumors (*Maeda et al., 2007*).

Characterization with MR imaging is feasible in the typical manifestations (imaging and clinical) of some pseudotumors and benign neoplastic lesions, such as lipomas, hemangiomas, lymphatic malformations, peri-articular cysts, benign neural tumors, abscesses, and hematomas (**Navarro et al., 2009**).

Conventional MR imaging is unable to offer information about the extent of tumoral necrosis and the presence of viable cells. Therefore, advanced MR imaging techniques, such as diffusion-weighted imaging (DWI), are now used in association with conventional MR imaging with the objective of improving diagnostic accuracy. DWI allows quantitative and qualitative analyses of tissue cellularity and cell membrane integrity and has been widely used for tumor detection and characterization (*Koh and Collins, 2007*).

AIM OF WORK

The aim of this work is to evaluate the ability of Diffusion-Weighted MRI in the detection and characterization of the musculoskeletal soft tissue tumors.