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Radiological and imaging manifestations
of endometriosis

Essay

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INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE WORK

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Endometriosis is a common gynecological problem. It is estimated that 8 to 15% of all women have this disease at some time during their reproductive life. (Ranney, 1978). It can be divided into two distinct clinical and pathological subgroups. Internal endometriosis or adenomyosis is characterized by invasion of endometrium into myometrium, while external endometriosis refers to the growth of endometrial tissue outside the uterus, usually in the pelvic cavity.

The commonest site of pelvic ectopic endometrial implants are in descending order of frequency : the ovaries, serosal surface of the uterus, uterosacral ligaments and the cul-de-sac . Other less common sites of pelvic implantation include rectosigmoid colon and urinary bladder. Remote endometrial implants have also been described in the lungs and pleura, extremities, skin, umbilicus, appendix, kidney and ureter, lymph nodes and in the liver.(Williams,1977)

Thus, it is important to keep in our minds endometriosis as one of the differential diagnosis of various lesions especially different pelvic masses, and to correlate between the clinical aspects of the disease and the different radiographic findings that may be present.

In this study, we will briefly review the clinical and radiographic aspects of endometriosis as it involves various body systems.

ANATOMY OF THE FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM