

Value of Multidetector CT Angiography in Evaluation of Vascular Injuries after Blunt Thoracic Trauma

Essay

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CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION & AIM OF WORK	1
ANATOMY OF THE THORACIC VESSELS	4
TECHNIQUE OF MULTIDETECTOR CT ANGIOGRAPHY OF THE THORACIC VESSELS	47
CLINICAL APPLICATIONS OF MULTIDETECTOR CT ANGIOGRAPHY IN BLUNT THORACIC TRAUMA WITH ILLUSTRATIVE CASES	81
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	150
REFERENCES	153
ARABIC SUMMARY	-

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.	Title	Page
1-1	The Relations of the Pulmonary Arteries	7
1-2	Relations of the Arch of the Aorta	13
1-3	Brachiocephalic Artery & The Thoracic Part of the Left Common Carotid Artery	17
1-4	The Azygos, Hemiazygos, and Accessory Hemiazygos Veins	30
1-5	Contrast bolus scan at level of pulmonary trunk bifurcation	35
1-6	Contrast bolus scan at level of aortic root.	37
1-7	Volume-rendered image with the left atrium and pulmonary veins	38
1-8	MDCT angiography of thoracic and abdominal aorta	39
1-9	Endoluminal view showing origin of innominate artery	40
1-10	MDCT pulmonary angiography	41
1-11	MDCT pulmonary angiography multiplanar reconstruction image	41
1-12	Normal inferior vena cava (IVC)	42
1-13	Normal Superior vena cava (SVC)	42
1-14	Normal subclavian and brachiocephalic veins, coronal volume-rendered view.	43

1-15	Left brachiocephalic vein, volume-rendered left anterior oblique projection.	44
1-16	Internal mammary veins, posterior coronal perspective	44
1-17	Azygos vein, right lateral, volume-rendered perspective	45
1-18	Pulmonary veins, inferior volume-rendered view	46
2-1	Diagram shows the difference between single-row detector and multiple-row detector CT designs.	49
2-2	Diagram of the typical cone angle of the X-ray beam in 64-detector-row CT	57
2-3	Protocol for Multi-Detector Row CT following Vascular Emergencies of the Thorax after Blunt and Iatrogenic Trauma	64
2-4	Volume rendering image of a patient with a right-sided aneurysmal descending thoracic aorta	74
2-5	Examples of post-processing techniques in a patient with ileofemoral disease	77
2-6	Dual-energy CTA of the thoracic aorta after endovascular aortic reconstruction. a Standard MPR, axial and sagittal	79
3-1	Traumatic pseudoaneurysm of the proximal descending thoracic aorta	87
3-2	Distal descending thoracic aortic injury. Axial (a) and coronal reformatted	87
3-3	Complex aortic dissection and bilateral hemothorax in a 44-year-old woman with blunt thoracic trauma from a motorcycle accident	88

3-4	Stanford type B dissection, MPR, and VR in the sagittal orientation	91
3-5	Type B aortic dissection. Gated chest computed tomography angiography	92
3-6	Stanford type A dissection with two separate false lumens	93
3-7	Stanford type A (DeBakey type 1) aortic dissection with intrapericardial rupture.	94
3-8	Branch vessel involvement with aortic dissection	96
3-9	Axial CT image of the aortic isthmus shows complete transection of the aortic wall	96
3-10	Stanford type A dissection	97
3-11	Aortic dissection: vascular compromise with end organ ischemia	98
3-12	Traumatic injury to the thoracic aorta	99
3-13	Postprocessing of aortic injuries.	101
3-14	Stanford type A dissection.	103
3-15	Aortic cobweb	105
3-16	Acute intramural hematoma of the aorta in a 45-year-old man with blunt thoracic trauma	107
3-17	Aortic intramural hematoma: precontrast and postcontrast imaging.	109
3-18	Atypical aortic contour	110

3-19	Poor visualization of an intimal flap due to improper timing of contrast material administration	112
3-20	Streak artifact caused by a pacemaker lead	113
3-21	Streak artifact caused by suboptimal arm positioning	114
3-22	Streak artifact caused by contrast material in the right pulmonary artery	115
3-23	Origins of the brachiocephalic artery and left common carotid artery mimicking dissection	117
3-24	Superior pericardial recess mimicking aortic dissection.	118
3-25	Left inferior pulmonary vein simulating a double lumen	119
3-26	Left brachiocephalic vein simulating aortic dissection	120
3-27	Left brachiocephalic vein mimicking aortic dissection	121
3-28	Right atrial appendage simulating aortic dissection	122
3-29	Trauma patient with Graves' disease: thymic hyperplasia simulating perivascular hematoma	123
3-30	Superior intercostal vein	125
3-31	CT angiography of ductus diverticulum	126
3-32	Atelectasis mimicking Stanford type B dissection	127
3-33	Pleural effusion simulating aortic dissection	128
3-34	Atypical aortic contour	131
3-35	Incomplete rupture of the descending aorta in a 51-year-old man with blunt thoracic trauma	133

3-36	Complete aortic rupture in a 48-year-old woman with blunt thoracic trauma	135
3-37	Aortic branch vessel injury	138
3-38	Subclavian artery injury	140
3-39	Complex ATAI	141
3-40	Aortic branch vessel injury	143
3-41	Internal mammary artery injury	144
3-42	Superior vena cava injury in blunt trauma	146
3-43	Periaortic hematoma without direct injury	147
3-44	Blunt cardiac injury	148
3-45	Blunt cardiac injury	149

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

Abbreviation	Meaning
CT	Computed Tomography
MSCT	Multi Slice Computed Tomography
MDCT	Multi Detector Computed Tomography
MSCTA	Multi Slice Computed Tomography Angiography
MIP	Maximum Intensity Projection
VR	Volume Rendering
3D	3 Dimensional
MPR	Multi Planar Reconstruction
CPR	Curved Planar Reconstruction
PACS	Picture Archiving and Communication System
MDCTA	Multi Detector Computed Tomography Angiography
TAI	Thoracic Aortic Injury
TAD	Thoracic Aortic Dissection
IRAD	International Registry of Aortic Dissection
IMH	Intra Mural Hemorrhage

INTRODUCTION & AIM OF WORK

In the modern age of high-speed vehicles and improved, coordinated emergency medical transportation, an increasing number of patients sustaining significant blunt chest trauma with thoracic aortic injury and blunt abdominal trauma are arriving alive at major trauma centers. To maximize survival, the physician managing such patients must be proficient at making an accurate diagnosis and prioritizing the approach to treatment (Fabian et al., 1997).

A variety of imaging modalities have been used to diagnose acute aortic disorders, including conventional aortography, ultrasonography (US), computed tomography (CT), and magnetic resonance (MR) imaging. The accuracy and ease of performing multi-detector row CT in patients in emergency settings who have presentations suggestive of aortic dissection or other aortic disorders have made this examination the first choice of referring physicians at hospitals (Hayter et al., 2006).

Assessment of thoracic vascular emergency is nowadays possible by using multirow CT angiography as a "one-stop shop" strategy. Thorough knowledge of anatomy, pathophysiology, and image rendering techniques, as well as precise description and

interpretation of thoracic vascular findings, are therefore essential in establishing the correct diagnosis and avoiding unnecessary and costly interventions (Alkadhi et al., 2004).

Multi-detector row computed tomographic (CT) angiography is an effective modality for vascular imaging in the thorax. It allows acquisition of high-resolution data sets during a single breath hold, making it the preferred method for evaluation of patients with acute vascular disease. The diagnoses can be established with multirow CT angiography in the emergency department. Thus, the time to diagnosis can be considerably decreased by obviating conventional angiography (Alkadhi et al., 2004).

Multirow CT angiography with two -and three-dimensional reformation can be used to diagnose vascular emergencies of the thorax after blunt and iatrogenic trauma (Alkadhi et al., 2004).

The introduction of multi-detector row CT has offered a number of advantages in the work-up strategy of emergency patients when compared with single-section CT. The shorter scanning time permits better opacification of the blood vessels and improved contrast material enhancement of parenchymal organs. Furthermore, faster data acquisitions allow multiple

consecutive CT examinations in the same patient in a shorter period of time (Novelline et al., 1999).

The Aim of This Work is:

To evaluate the utility and efficiency of multidetector CT angiography in the assessment of vascular injuries after blunt thoracic trauma.

VASCULAR ANATOMY OF THE THORAX

Major Thoracic Blood Vessels

The major blood vessels comprise the pulmonary trunk, the thoracic aorta and its branches, the superior and inferior venae cavae and their tributaries.

Arteries

1- PULMONARY TRUNK (fig 1-1)

The pulmonary trunk, or pulmonary artery, conveys deoxygenated blood from the right ventricle to the lungs. About 5 cm in length and 3 cm in diameter, it is the most anterior of the cardiac vessels and arises from the base of the right ventricle (from the pulmonary anulus surmounting the conus arteriosus) above and to the left of the supraventricular crest (Johnson and Shah., 2005).

It slopes up and back, at first in front of the ascending aorta, then to its left. Below the aortic arch it divides, level with

the fifth thoracic vertebra and to the left of the midline, into right and left pulmonary arteries of almost equal size. The pulmonary trunk bifurcation lies below, in front and to the left of the tracheal bifurcation (Johnson and Shah., 2005).

Relations

The artery is entirely within the pericardium, enclosed with the ascending aorta in a common tube of visceral pericardium. Anteriorly it is separated from the sternal end of the left second intercostal space by the pleura, left lung and pericardium. Posterior are at first the ascending aorta and left coronary artery, then the left atrium. The ascending aorta is finally on its right (Gabella., 1995).

An auricle and coronary artery are on each side of its origin. The superficial cardiac plexus is between the pulmonary bifurcation and the aortic arch; above, behind and right are the tracheal bifurcation, lymph nodes and nerves (Gabella., 1995).

Right Pulmonary Artery

Slightly longer and larger than the left artery, it runs horizontally to the right, behind the ascending aorta, superior vena cava and upper right pulmonary vein, then in front and below the tracheal bifurcation and thence in front of the oesophagus and right main bronchus to the right pulmonary hilum. It divides as it emerges from behind the superior vena cava into two large branches (Gabella., 1995).

Left Pulmonary Artery

Shorter and smaller than the right, it runs horizontally in front of the ascending aorta and the left principal bronchus to the left hilum. It emerges from within the concavity of the aortic arch and descends anterior to the descending aorta to enter the oblique fissure. The branches of the left pulmonary artery are extremely variable (Gabella., 1995).