



Role of diffusion-weighted MR imaging in differentiation between malignant and benign portal vein thrombosis in patients with Hepatocellular carcinoma

Thesis

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَالَ

سَبَّحَانَكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَلِيمُ الْعَظِيمُ

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List of Contents

Title	Page No.
List of Tables	i
List of Figures	ii
List of Abbreviations.....	vii
Introduction	1
Aim of the Work.....	3
Review of Literature	
Embryology and Anatomy of the Portal Vein	4
Etiology and Pathophysiology of Portal Vein Thrombosis.....	13
Development, Growth and Spread of Hepatocellular Carcinoma.....	18
CT and MRI Appearance of HCC and its Nodules Precursors	31
Multimodality Imaging of Portal Vein Thrombosis.....	44
Diffusion-Weighted Imaging: Concepts and Principles.....	53
Patients and Methods.....	69
Results	76
Case Presentation	85
Discussion	95
Summary and Conclusion.....	100
References	102
Arabic Summary	—

List of Tables

Table No.	Title	Page No.
Table (1):	Local risk factors for PVT.....	15
Table (2):	Systemic risk factors for PVT.....	17
Table (3):	CT and MR imaging appearance of precursor nodules.....	31
Table (4):	Cases of HCC with malignant portal vein thrombosis.	76
Table (5):	Cases of HCC with bland portal vein thrombosis.	77
Table (6):	Descriptive Statistics.	77
Table (7):	Sex.	78
Table (8):	PV. Invasion.	78
Table (9):	Thrombus. Enhancement.....	79
Table (10):	Distance. HCC. Thrombus.	79
Table (11):	Thrombus. ADC.....	80

List of Figures

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (1):	Drawings illustrate the embryologic development of the portal venous system	4
Figure (2):	Coronal maximum intensity projection image from a non-contrast MR portography using T-SLIP technique showing portal and splenic veins with coronary vein.....	6
Figure (3):	Normal portal vein anatomy.....	7
Figure (4):	Segmental hepatic anatomy.....	8
Figure (5):	Variant first branch of the main portal vein.....	9
Figure (6):	Trifurcation of the main portal vein	10
Figure (7):	Portal vein trifurcation	10
Figure (8):	70-year-old woman with abnormally proximal origin of segment VII vein (SVII vein).....	11
Figure (9):	CT portogram show liver segment VI portal branch (star) arising as first branch of main portal vein.....	11
Figure (10):	Schematic drawing illustrates typical changes in intranodular hemodynamics and OATP expression during multistep hepatocarcinogenesis	21
Figure (11):	MR Images in 39-year-old man with liver cirrhosis and multiple cirrhotic nodules, some of which resemble dysplastic nodules at imaging.....	32
Figure (12):	MR Images in 55-year-old man with low grade dysplastic nodule and hepatitis B-related cirrhosis	34

List of Figures Cont...

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (13):	MR images in a 58-year-old man with fat-containing high-grade dysplastic nodule and hepatitis B-related cirrhosis	35
Figure (14):	MR images in a 66-year-old woman with fat-containing HCC and hepatitis B-related cirrhosis	37
Figure (15):	HCC in 35-year-old man with hepatitis C-related cirrhosis	38
Figure (16):	HCC with definite capsule appearance in a 54-year-old man with hepatitis C-related cirrhosis	39
Figure (17):	Infiltrative HCC in a 67-year-old man with a history of excessive alcohol use and portal venous thrombosis found at CT	41
Figure (18):	Infiltrative HCC and portal venous tumor thrombosis in a 51-year-old man who presented for surveillance with a history of hepatitis C virus cirrhosis	41
Figure (19):	Infiltrative HCC in a 67-year-old man with a history of excessive alcohol use and portal venous thrombosis found at CT performed for follow-up of aortic aneurysm	42
Figure (20):	75-year-old man with a history of alcoholic cirrhosis whose serum AFP level was 50 ng/mL	43
Figure (21):	Oblique sonogram of right upper quadrant shows distended main portal vein is with hypoechoic thrombus (T) relative to liver parenchyma (L) and Is demarcated by more echogenic venous wall (open arrows)	45

List of Figures Cont...

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (22):	A color Doppler US scan shows hypoechoic complete thrombosis of the right portal vein	46
Figure (23):	Chronic portal vein thrombosis. Axial contrast-enhanced CT image shows cavernous transformation of the main portal vein (arrows) with multiple, dilated, tortuous porta hepatis collaterals	47
Figure (24):	32-year-old man with acute appendicitis	48
Figure (25):	Portal vein thrombosis in a patient with hepatocellular carcinoma. Coronal contrast-enhanced arterial phase CT shows a hypervascular mass (black arrows) infiltrating the portal vein (white arrows)	49
Figure (26):	Patient with hepatocellular carcinoma	50
Figure (27):	Patient with hepatocellular carcinoma	51
Figure (28):	Patient with cirrhosis and hepatoceliular carcinoma. Hepatic arteriogram during late arterial phase shows tumor vessels (arrows) within thrombus in main portal vein	52
Figure (29):	Schematic illustrates water molecule movement	54
Figure (30):	Schematic illustrates the effect of a diffusion-weighted sequence on water molecules (solid circles) within highly cellular tissue or a restricted environment	56

List of Figures Cont...

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (31):	Axial diffusion-weighted image ($b = 0$ sec/mm ²) obtained in a 60-year-old woman shows a signal void within the inferior vena cava (arrow). Small b values will result in decreased signal of highly mobile water molecules such as occur within vessels	58
Figure (32):	Sagittal diffusion-weighted image ($b = 800$ sec/mm ²) obtained in a 38-year-old woman shows the endometrium with normal high signal intensity	59
Figure (33):	Graph illustrates signal intensity versus b values at diffusion-weighted imaging (DWI) of tissue with normal versus restricted diffusion	60
Figure (34):	Graph illustrates the logarithm of signal intensity versus b values at diffusion-weighted imaging of normal liver versus liver tumor	61
Figure (35):	T2 shine-through in a 42-year-old woman with a small cyst in the left hepatic lobe	63
Figure (36):	Hemangioma	65
Figure (37):	Hepatocellular carcinoma in an 81-year-old woman	67
Figure (38):	Diffuse liver disease	68
Figure (39):	ROC curve analysis showing the diagnostic performance of ADC for discriminating malignant thrombosis from those benign	81
Figure (40):	Age.	82
Figure (41):	ADC.	82
Figure (42):	Size.	82

List of Figures Cont...

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (43):	Gender.	83
Figure (44):	Portal vein distribution.....	83
Figure (45):	Enhancement pattern.	83
Figure (46):	Case 1.....	85
Figure (47):	Case 2.....	87
Figure (48):	Case 3.....	89
Figure (49):	Case 4.....	91
Figure (50):	Case 5.....	92
Figure (51):	Case 6.....	93
Figure (52):	Case 7.....	94

List of Abbreviations

Abb.	Full term
ADC	Apparent diffusion coefficient
CT	Computed tomography
DW	Diffusion-weighted
HCC	Hepatocellular carcinoma
IVC.....	Inferior vena cava
LPV	Left portal vein
MPD.....	Myeloproliferative disease
MPV	Main portal vein
MRI.....	Magnetic resonance imaging
OATP	Organic anionic transporting polypeptides
PACS	Picture archiving and communication system
PC	Protein C
PVT.....	Portal vein thrombosis
RAPV	Right anterior portal vein
RF	Radiofrequency
ROIs.....	Regions of interest
RPPV	Right posterior portal vein
RPV.....	Right portal vein
SMV	Superior mesenteric vein
SV	Splenic vein

INTRODUCTION

Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is the fifth most common tumor in the world, and its incidence is increasing, especially in Western nations (*Choi et al., 2014*).

In Egypt, HCC is the second most common cancer in men and the 6th most common cancer in women. Hospital-based studies from Egypt have reported an overall increase in the relative frequency of all liver-related cancers in Egypt, from approximately 4% in 1993 to 7.3% in 2003. Former studies in Egypt have shown the increasing importance of HCV infection in the etiology of liver cancer, estimated to account for 40–50% of cases, and the declining influence of HBV and HBV/HCV infection (25% and 15%, respectively) (*El-Zayadi et al., 2005*).

HCC may be associated with portal vein thrombosis which could be either bland or malignant (*Choi et al., 2014*).

Neoplastic portal vein thrombi in patients with HCC gravely affect the prognosis and the subsequent treatment options. These patients are considered unsuitable for most of the therapeutic options (*Catalano et al., 2010*). These patients are considered unsuitable for most therapeutic options, including ethanol ablation, trans arterial chemoembolization, liver resection, and even orthotopic liver transplantation. Five-year survival after surgical resection is 12%–39% in patients with neoplastic vascular invasion and 59% in those without. Such patients usually undergo palliative or experimental treatment (*Kuan et al., 2016*).

Although the reference standard in the diagnosis of the malignant portal vein thrombosis is the pathologic examination, diagnostic imaging plays a pivotal role; demonstration of arterial flow within the thrombus by using spectral Doppler US is 100% specific for tumor thrombus. Also contrast-enhanced US has been demonstrated to be 88% sensitive and 100% specific in the diagnosis of malignant portal vein thrombosis (*Tarantino et al., 2006*). These figures are similar to those obtained at contrast-enhanced CT, with a sensitivity of 86% and a specificity of 100% (*Shah et al., 2010*).

Multiple studies have demonstrated excellent sensitivity and specificity of MRI for the detection and characterization of HCC, particularly for smaller tumors, 1–2 cm in size with sensitivity up to 84% and 47% with MRI and CT, respectively (*Ayuso et al., 2012*).

DW imaging is an MR technology that measures the diffusion of water molecules in the tissue. Therefore, characterization of tissue is enabled; in malignant tissue, the diffusion of water molecule is restricted, so lower ADC values are noted as compared to benign lesions. Also, DW imaging does not require contrast medium administration; therefore, it can be safely done in patients with contraindications to contrast media (*Catalano et al., 2010*).

AIM OF THE WORK

To determine the role of DW imaging in differentiating between the benign and malignant portal vein thrombosis in patient with HCC.

Chapter 1

EMBRYOLOGY AND ANATOMY OF THE PORTAL VEIN

1. Embryological development

The development of the portal venous system occurs between the 4th and 12th weeks of gestation. It results from a complex process that includes selective persistence of parts of the vitelline venous system and communication with the umbilical venous system around the developing liver (Fig.1) (*Lee et al., 2011*).

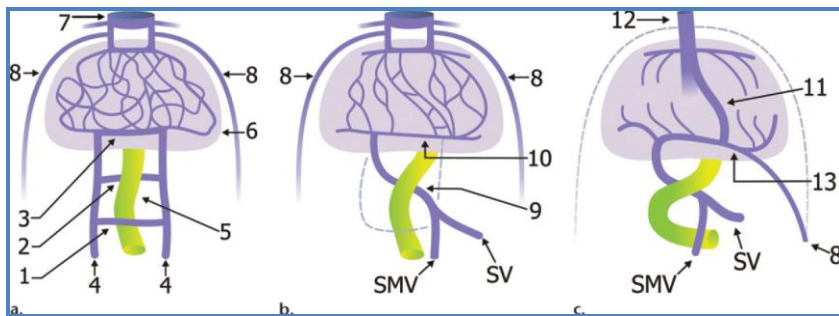


Figure (1): Drawings illustrate the embryologic development of the portal venous system. **(a)** Initially, the caudal-ventral (1), dorsal (2), and cranial-ventral (3) anastomoses develop from the paired vitelline veins (4) around the duodenum (5). They pierce the septum transversum (6), forming multiple sinusoids, and drain into the sinus venosus (7). The paired umbilical veins (8) also drain into the sinus venosus. **(b)** In the next stage, involution of parts of the vitelline veins and caudal-ventral anastomosis (dashed line) occurs. The dorsal anastomosis becomes the portal vein (9), and the cranial-ventral anastomosis becomes the left portal vein (10). **(c)** Next, the right umbilical vein and cranial portion of the left umbilical vein involute (dashed line). The ductus venosus (11) forms between the caudal left umbilical vein (8) and the inferior vena cava (12). Last, a new communication forms between the left umbilical vein and the left portal vein (13). SMV = superior mesenteric vein, SV = splenic vein (*Lee et al., 2011*).