

Myofasciitis and Polyneuritis Related to Buprenorphine Abuse

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ABSTRACT

Various kinds of neuromuscular manifestations are known with the recreational drugs. We report an interesting case of extensive myositis and fasciitis of thigh following an injection of a solution of Buprenorphine. The inflammatory process affected the sciatic and obturator nerve as well.

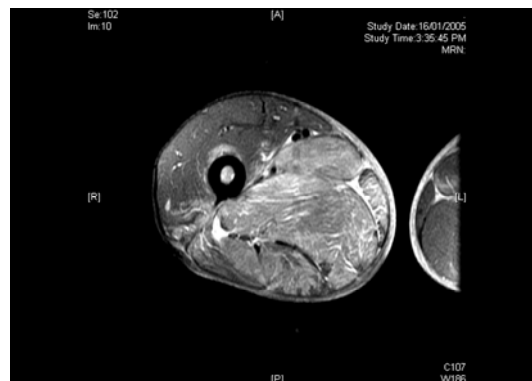
Search terms: myositis, fasciitis, polyneuritis, buprenorphine, recreational drugs



1a



1b



1c

Figure 1: MR of the right thigh: a)Short T1 inversion recovery (STIR), b)Spin-Echo (SE) with contrast and c) Post-Gadolinium T1 Axial section.

IMAGE DESCRIPTION AND CLINICAL RELEVANCE

A 32 year old man presented with pain over right thigh and difficulty in walking for one day. The complaints started a day after a self injection of 2ml solution of 4 crushed tablets of Buprenorphine in boiled water. He did so for recreational use, selecting the right upper anterior thigh to get a 'faster high' with a hope of 'hitting one of the many nearby blood vessels.

On examination, he was afebrile and had a swollen and tender right thigh. Right lower limb examination revealed weakness of the hip adduction and a foot-drop due to the obturator and sciatic neuropathy, respectively. Laboratory abnormalities included markedly raised serum creatinine kinase (24918 U/L, normal 30-350) and myoglobin (14840 ng/ml, normal 15-96). MRI of the right thigh (Fig. 1) showed swelling of the muscles of postero-medial compartment with post contrast enhancement, suggestive of myositis. Contrast enhancement was seen in deep fascial planes, also consistent with the diagnosis of fasciitis. Neurophysiological studies of the right lower limb confirmed an obturator and sciatic neuropathy. Posterior compartment pressure in the thigh was within normal limits. There was no clinical or laboratory evidence of an infective process.

He showed significant improvement with hydration, supportive and rehabilitative therapy. The laboratory values became normal in about a week. Considerable improvement, with normal hip adduction and only minimal right foot-drop, were noted on a follow-up visit 2 months later. He is no longer using recreational drugs.