

Medical Images

Acinic Cell Carcinoma: A Twist in the Tale

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Acinic cell carcinoma accounts for 17% of all the salivary gland malignancies. Parotid gland is a massively involved gland with female prevalence. The word 'Acinus' is derived or originated due to the histologic resemblance of the tumor invading cells to the parenchymatous cells of the gland.¹

Diagnosis of this lesion can be misleading at times, due to its resemblance to the normal parotid tissue.² This tumor presents itself in a variety of histological patterns like Acinar-lobular, microcystic, follicular, papillary, cystic, medullary, ducto-glandular, primitive tubular. A panel of tumor markers like CK7, CD56, CD57 and so on can be used in immunohistochemistry for the diagnosis of acinic cell carcinoma (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Scanner view revealing vacuolated cells, with clear cell changes, solid microcystic variant of acinic cell carcinoma.

Diagnosis using imaging studies can prove to be difficult, due to its similarity with benign lesions.³ Total parotidectomy followed by radiotherapy is the preferred mode of treatment (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: High power view of acinic cell carcinoma with evidence of hemorrhage, areas of comedonecrosis, with mild perineural invasion and inflamed stroma.

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