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Kikuchi-Fujimoto's Disease

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Abstract

Kikuchi-Fujimoto's disease is characterized by cervical lymphadenopathy affecting young Asian females. It is now well-recognized and has been reported in Caucasians as well. Other groups of lymph nodes can also be affected. We report 5 cases of cervical lymphadenopathy in young women ranging in age 24-44, whose presenting symptoms were neck mass and fever. The excised lymph nodes showed the typical pale areas of necrosis with karyorrhectic debris, surrounded by histocytes and activated lymphocytes, and with notable absence of neutrophils. Special stains for acid fast bacilli and fungal organisms were negative. The differential diagnosis includes malignant lymphoma and lupus lymphadenopathy.

Diagnosis is made by lymph node biopsy, or, in experienced hands, by needle aspirate.

This entity is a self-limiting, generally benign, reactive lymphadenopathy first described in Japan by Kikuchi in 1972, and also in the same year by Fujimoto. It is now recognized worldwide, and although it has a lower incidence among Caucasians, it is important to keep this disease in mind in the differential diagnosis of lymphadenopathy in this mufti-ethnic society.