

CASE REPORT

Lymphocele Following Saphenous Vein Harvesting

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Case Study

A fifty eight year old female with history of having a coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) 10 months previously presented with a soft ball-size lump on her left leg at the incision point where her saphenous vein was stripped off. The lump had gradually increased in size over months. The patient denied any local trauma, pain or discharge. Physical examination revealed a soft, mobile, non-pulsatile swelling medial and just above the knee of 12 x 8 x 5 cm size. No associated erythema or tenderness were observed (Figure). An ultrasound with duplex Doppler showed a non-vascular homogenous anechoic cystic fluid collection. The clinical findings were consistent with a diagnosis of lymphocele. The patient Patient refused the needle aspiration or surgery due to fear of recurrence. To date, patient has had no symptoms except for the inconvenience of having a big lump on her thigh.



Discussion

Post-CABG lymphocele is a subcutaneous collection of lymphatic fluid that develops due to disruption of lymphatic vessels during saphenous vein harvesting. Although uncommon (1), it is associated with risk factors like female gender, obesity, diabetes mellitus and open saphenous vein harvesting (2,3). Treatment of these lymphoceles should initially be conservative, but if this approach fails, surgical excision should be performed. Special attention should be paid to identifying and ligating the feeding lymphatic vessel (4).

References

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