

Teaching NeuroImages: Multiple epidural abscesses after acupuncture

Hyun-Jeung Yu, MD, MS
Ku-Eun Lee, MD
Hyun Seok Kang, MD
Sook Young Roh, MD,
PhD

Correspondence to
Dr. Yu:
yjh3140@hanmail.net

An 80-year-old woman presented with 2 days of progressive quadriparesis, difficulty voiding, and fever. She had received acupuncture in the cervical and lumbar regions for 5 days beginning a week before. Whole-spine MRI showed multiple epidural abscesses at levels C3-C7, L3-L5, and L5-S1 (figure). Broad-spectrum antibiotics were administered, and the abscesses were surgically drained. Strains of *Staphylococcus aureus* were isolated. Single epidural abscesses after acupuncture have been reported, but multiple abscesses due to acupuncture are extremely rare.^{1,2}

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Hyun-Jeung Yu: writing the manuscript. Ku-Eun Lee, Hyun Seok Kang, Sook Young Roh: review and discussion of the manuscript.

STUDY FUNDING

No targeted funding reported.

DISCLOSURE

The authors report no disclosures relevant to the manuscript. Go to Neurology.org for full disclosures.

REFERENCES

1. Bang MS, Lim SH. Paraplegia caused by spinal infection after acupuncture. *Spinal Cord* 2006;44:258–259.
2. Yazawa S, Ohi T, Sugimoto S, Satoh S, Matsukura S. Cervical spinal epidural abscess following acupuncture: successful treatment with antibiotics. *Intern Med* 1998; 37:161–165.

Figure Multiple epidural abscesses (arrowheads) at the levels of C6 to C7 and L3 to L5



There are also multiseptated abscesses (arrow) in the right paravertebral muscle from C3 to C7, the right scalenus anterior muscle at C7, and the left paraspinous process area from L3 to S1. An epidural abscess at the C6–C7 level induced compressive myelopathy (black arrowhead).