

Bilateral shoulder pain (2003:11a)

Case report

A 48-year-old man presented to the emergency department with a recent onset of bilateral shoulder cramp-like pain and inability to move both arms. He denied any previous significant health problems. He noticed the onset of the above symptoms when he woke up from a short nap. He reported no trauma. Physical examination showed a painful limitation of the range of movements of both shoulders most evident at external rotation. The other joints of the arms were normal. Strength and sensitivity were preserved. The patient was admitted because of severe pain, necessitating morphine therapy. Blood tests revealed an elevated white cell count and elevated CK values (517 U/l - N195 U/l). Routine chest X-ray and cervical spine CT, obtained to rule out a disk herniation, were interpreted as normal. Extensive work-up, including serologic tests for infective and autoimmune disorders and a lumbar puncture, was normal. An ultrasound (US) of the left shoulder was performed after rheumatological consultation to rule out bursitis, joint effusion and to assess the shoulder girdle muscles (Fig 1).

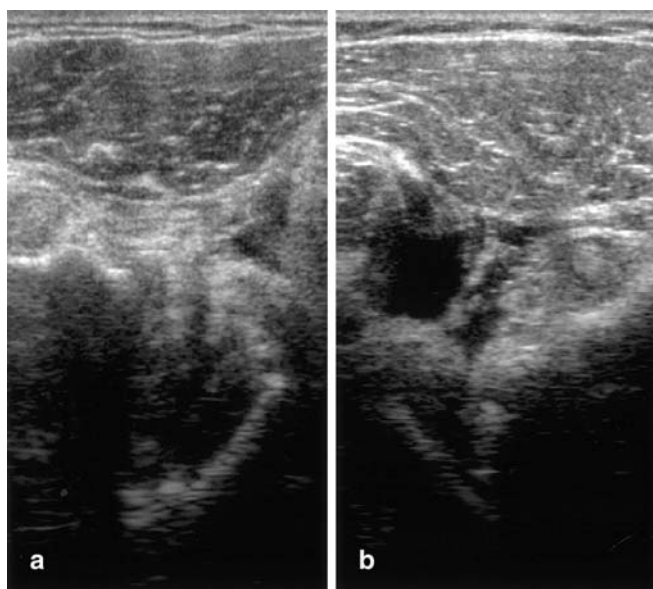


Fig. 1 Axial sonograms obtained on the anterior aspect of left (a) and right (b) shoulder

What is the diagnosis?

Readers are invited to supply one possible diagnosis via electronic means to akd15@radiol.cam.ac.uk stating "Interpretation Corner 2003:11a" in the subject/title of their email.

You should include your name, title, address, fax and phone number.

Deadline: one clear calendar month from distribution date.

Three months after the initial publication of the case history, the authors will publish the final diagnosis and a brief summary. The summary will describe exactly how the case was investigated at the host institution, how the diagnosis was established and the teaching points of the case in question.

The names of the first 25 radiologists submitting the correct diagnosis will be published (only one from any individual centre and none from the host institution)!