INTRODUCTION

Tc-99m methoxyisobutylisonitrile (MIBI) scintigraphy is generally used as a second-line diagnostic tool for obscured breast lesions. When the entire field of view is examined carefully, it is often possible to detect additional lesions unrelated to the initial intent and purpose of the examination. Herein we present a case of breast cancer incidentally detected by cardiac Tc-99m MIBI scintigraphy. An area of uptake was detected in the breast during a cardiac imaging test. Further evaluation of this lesion revealed a histopathological diagnosis of invasive ductal carcinoma of the breast. Sensitivity of this scintigraphic technique is not enough sufficient to use this test as a screening test for breast cancer, but it may provide supplemental information. Since it is not uncommon to find incidental lesions during imaging studies, examination of the image field may help clinicians find otherwise unrecognized or undiagnosed pathologies.

Key Words: Breast, Carcinoma, Scintigraphy

CASE REPORT

A 29-year-old female patient was admitted to the cardiology clinic for chest pain. After clinical examination, a Tc-99m MIBI myocardial perfusion scintigraphy was performed. According to the report her cardiac findings were normal but in the field of view there was an area of focal accumulation in the lateral part of left breast, and further examination was recommended (Figure 1). The patient was therefore referred to the department of surgery for breast examination. A 4×4 cm sized, immobile solid lesion was detected in the lateral inferior quadrant of her left breast in physical examination. Ultrasound revealed a 24×18 mm sized spiculated mass lesion which contained micro-calculifications in addition to a heterogeneous hypoechoic area filling the lateral inferior quadrant of the left breast. There were also multiple axillary lymphadenopathies, the greatest size of which was 13.5×13.5 mm. The lesion was classified as BIRADS 5 (Figure 2). Fine needle aspiration cytology was reported as suspicious for malignancy. Further test revealed no distant metastasis.

A two-step operation was scheduled. First, the lesion was excised totally and sent to histopathology department for frozen

An Incidentally Detected Breast Cancer on TC-99m MIBI Cardiac Scintigraphy

Duray Seker, Gaye Seker, Emine Ozturk, Bahattin Bayar, Hakan Kulacoglu
Departments of Surgery and Radiology, Diskapi Yildirim Beyazit Teaching and Research Hospital, Ankara, Turkey

Tc-99m methoxyisobutylisonitrile (MIBI) scintigraphy is generally used as a second-line diagnostic tool for obscured breast lesions. When the entire field of view is examined carefully, it is often possible to detect additional lesions unrelated to the initial intent and purpose of the examination. Herein we present a case of breast cancer incidentally detected by cardiac Tc-99m MIBI scintigraphy. An area of uptake was detected in the breast during a cardiac imaging test. Further evaluation of this lesion revealed a histopathological diagnosis of invasive ductal carcinoma of the breast. Sensitivity of this scintigraphic technique is not enough sufficient to use this test as a screening test for breast cancer, but it may provide supplemental information. Since it is not uncommon to find incidental lesions during imaging studies, examination of the image field may help clinicians find otherwise unrecognized or undiagnosed pathologies.

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section examination. After receiving a confirmed diagnosis of “infiltrative ductal carcinoma” a modified radical mastectomy was performed. The histopathologic examination report of the specimen was infiltrative ductal carcinoma in the 4 cm tumor and 4 out of 28 dissected lymph nodes were found to be metastatic. The tumor was staged as pT2N2M0.

**DISCUSSION**

Although mammography has a relatively high sensitivity of 80% to 90%, especially in examination of older women, it is less reliable for detecting lesions in dyspalstic and dense breast [9]. The major drawback of mammography is its low specificity and low positive predictive value of only 10% to 35% for non-palpable cancers [10].

Tc-99m MIBI is widely available as a myocardial perfusion imaging agent. The uptake of Tc-99m MIBI in breast cancer was first reported in 1992 [11]. MIBI was subsequently studied by many investigators for imaging of non-palpable breast lesions, staging of breast cancer, lymph node imaging and to document the extensiveness of breast cancer lesions and as prognostic marker for chemotherapy response. Although this radiopharmaceutical may not be sensitive enough to serve as a screening test, it is useful in the evaluation of patient with inconclusive breast examinations as a second line diagnostic tool [12]. The overall sensitivity and specificity of Tc-99m MIBI scintigraphy is respectively 75.4% and 82.7% [13]. Tc-99m MIBI scintigraphy has a sensitivity of 84.2% and a specificity of 90.9% in detecting axillary metastasis [14]. The sensitivity and specificity is higher in palpable lesions but in such cases, other tests like ultrasonography and mammography are more useful for diagnosis. It is reported lower sensitivety and specificity in non-palpable lesions. In the postpartum period diffuse uptake of Tc-99m sestamibi can be seen in non-cancer breast tissue due to lactation [15].

Once an examination is performed, a wide surgical approach must be done and all available data must be evaluated to apply appropriate judgement and to proceed in the best interset of the patient. As in this case, some times patients may have breast masses or other lesions that are not yet discovered. Since it is not surprising to find incidental lesions during imaging studies, examination of the image field in its entirety consideration of all the data may assist clinicians in the diagnosis of previously undetected illnesses.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

**REFERENCES**


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**Figure 1.** Scintigraphic image showing accumulation in left breast (arrow showing breast accumulation).

**Figure 2.** Ultrasonographic image of the breast lesion (arrow pointing the mass).
Incidentally Breast Cancer Detection


