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Edited by Dr. Bhavin Jankharia

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Calcific Tendinitis

Calcific tendinitis is a condition where hydroxyapatite calcification occurs in different tendons of the body, most commonly in the shoulder, in the rotator cuff (Fig. 1). It may present acutely with debilitating pain or may cause chronic, dull pain. Sometimes, it may be an incidental finding in an asymptomatic person.

The condition is diagnosed when calcific foci are seen on X-rays or MRI in tendons, associated with edema within and in the peri-tendinous region (Figs. 2, 3).

Most patients will respond to standard antiinflammatory medication. A small number of patients who don't may need barbotage or arthroscopy/surgery.



Fig. 1. Rotator cuff calcific tendinitis. This is the commonest site involved. The radiograph shows typical calcification in the supraspinatus tendon (arrow), which is also seen on the accompanying MRI images, with edema in the greater tuberosity and the subacromial bursa.

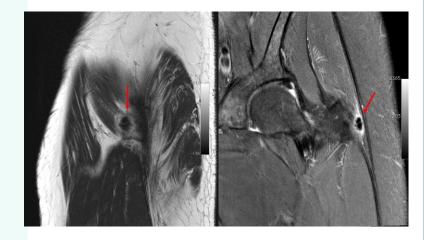


Fig. 2: Peritrochanteric hip calcific tendinitis. Sagittal and coronal MRI images show the black calcific foci (arrows) with surrounding edema. This is the 2nd commonest site of calcific tendinitis.

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At a glance

- ◆ Calcific tendonitis is not an uncommon condition causing acute or chronic pain
- ◆ It is easily diagnosed when inflammation is seen in and around a tendon with calcific foci
- ◆ Treatment is usually conservative.



Fig. 3: Acute calcific tendinitis of the triceps. This lady presented with just 2 days history of pain. The X-ray shows calcific foci in the triceps. The MRI shows extensive edema of

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Main Clinic

383 | Bhaveshwar Vihar | Sadar V. P. Road | Prarthana Samaj | Charni Road | Mumbai 400004 | T: 022 6617 3333

Cardiac, Chest, & Interventional Twin Beam CT

371 | Nishat Business Centre | Arya Bhavan | Sardar V. P. Rd | Next to Marwari Vidyalaya | Charni Road | Mumbai 400004 | T: 022 22 6848 6666

Whole Body PET & 3T MRI Centre

Kamala Mills Compound | Ground Floor | Trade Garden Building | Senapati Bapat Marg | Lower Parel | Mumbai 400013 | T: 022 6617 4444

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