PP 4 - An uncommon case of an axillary artery aneurysm caused by atherosclerosis: a case report

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Introduction: Axillary artery aneurysms are a rare subset of the peripheral artery aneurysms. The most common cause of axillary artery aneurysm is trauma; other causes include infections, atherosclerosis, collagen vascular disorders, repetitive overhead movements, and thoracic outlet syndrome. This case presentation describes an axillary artery aneurysm that occurred due to atherosclerosis.

Case presentation: A 60-year-old female presented with a painless, pulsating mass in her left axilla for three weeks, associated with numbness in the posterior aspect of her left arm suggesting nerve compression. She reported no history of trauma, repetitive arm movements, smoking, or underlying comorbidities. General and neurological examinations were unremarkable. She had a 2 cm x 2 cm pulsating mass in the left axilla with palpable distal pulses. Blood investigations and thoracic inlet X-rays were normal. Ultrasound revealed a fusiform aneurysm in the third part of the left axillary artery. Surgical correction was performed through an open approach. The fusiform aneurysm was meticulously dissected, and reconstruction was performed using a basilic vein graft. Recovery was uneventful. Histopathology confirmed a true aneurysm with atherosclerotic plaque and thrombus formation.

Discussion and conclusion: No underlying cause was identified from the history, clinical examination, or initial investigations. However, histology reports showed atherosclerosis as the underlying aetiology for this presentation, despite its rarity in this anatomical location. This case highlights that atherosclerosis should be considered a potential cause of axillary artery aneurysms even in patients without identifiable risk factors.

Keywords: Axillary artery, Aneurysm, Atherosclerosis.