

Case Report: A Rare Case of Ovarian Abscess with an Unclear Aetiology

Background

Primary ovarian abscesses are rare, particularly in patients without an identifiable source of infection.

Aim

This case highlights a rare occurrence of ovarian abscess formation in the absence of common infection pathways, such as recent surgery; raising questions regarding its aetiology and pathogenesis.

Case

Claudia Mallory | New South Wales Health

A 42 year old female presented with pelvic pain. Her background included a Mirena IUD in situ since 2021, bilateral salpingectomy and left ovarian dermoid cystectomy in 2021, fibroids awaiting hysterectomy, endometriosis, appendicectomy and tension-free vaginal tape. Examination revealed a soft but tender abdomen, abnormal vaginal discharge and cervical motion tenderness. She had an elevated white cell count of 11.1 and CRP of 24; and a normal CEA, Ca-125 and CA 19.9. Further investigations were negative, including chlamydia and gonorrhoea PCR, urine MCS, and high vaginal swab with normal flora only. Her ultrasound was concerning for a complex right ovarian mass. She underwent a right oophorectomy, hysteroscopy dilatation and curettage, and removal of Mirena. Postoperatively, she developed a fever, requiring antibiotics, and then recovered well.

Results

Histopathology confirmed a right ovarian abscess with xanthogranulomatous inflammation. Peritoneal fluid analysis revealed elevated white cells but no detectable organisms.

Discussion

This case raises questions regarding the pathogenesis of ovarian abscesses in patients without tubal involvement or recent pelvic procedures. Possible explanations within the literature include haematogenous or lymphatic spread, de novo infection within endometriomas, or secondary infection from undiagnosed sources such as appendicitis or diverticulitis. This case highlights the importance of considering ovarian abscesses in the differential diagnosis of adnexal masses, even in the absence of typical risk factors, and underscores the ongoing uncertainty regarding their aetiology.

References

1. Sen S, Singh K, Agarwal J, Sen G. A Massive Primary Ovarian Abscess within an Endometrioma in a Young Nullipara – An Unusual Case and Review of Literature. *Fertility & Reproduction*. 2020 Jun 29;02(03):75–9.

