



Northern Lincolnshire
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A curious case of lung lesions

Dr Marjorie Su Yin Teo (ST1 Radiology Registrar)

Dr Deepak Pai (Consultant Radiologist)

Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby

Background

- 69-year-old male who had a CT angiogram aorta for monitoring of abdominal aortic aneurysm discovered from his GP that the scan showed left lower lobe lesions suspicious of malignancy.
- Patient did not have any history of respiratory or B symptoms.
- Patient was referred to be seen in the respiratory clinic under the 2-week-wait pathway.

CT thorax, abdomen and pelvis with contrast

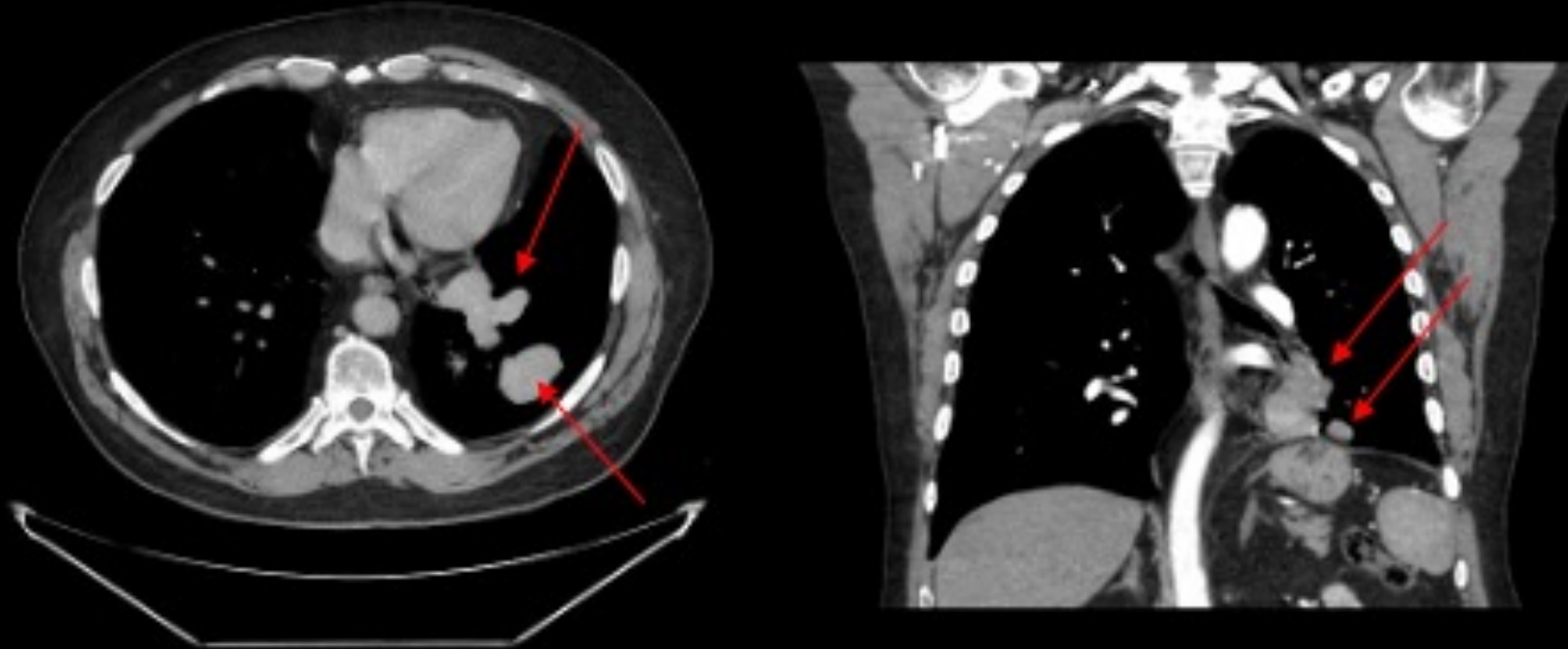


Fig 1: Arrows showing multiple left pulmonary lesions suspicious of neoplasia on axial and coronal planes.

Patient went on to have a series of further investigations...

- Bronchoscopy showed benign bronchial epithelial cells and alveolar macrophages with no evidence of malignancy.

PET FDG

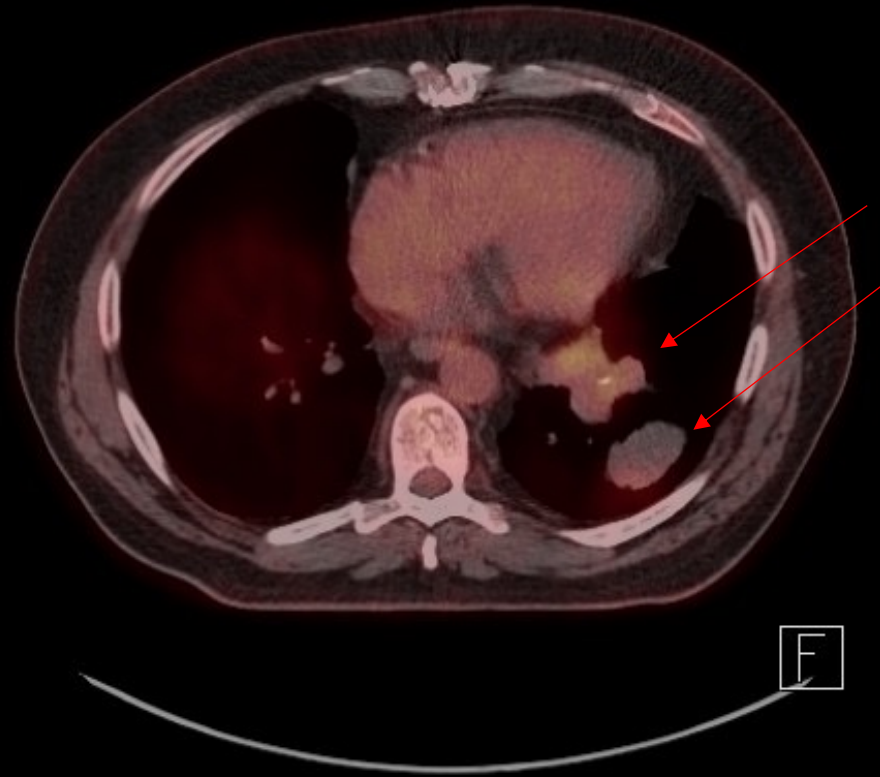


Fig 2: An unusually low uptake of the left lower lobe lesions on PET FDG.

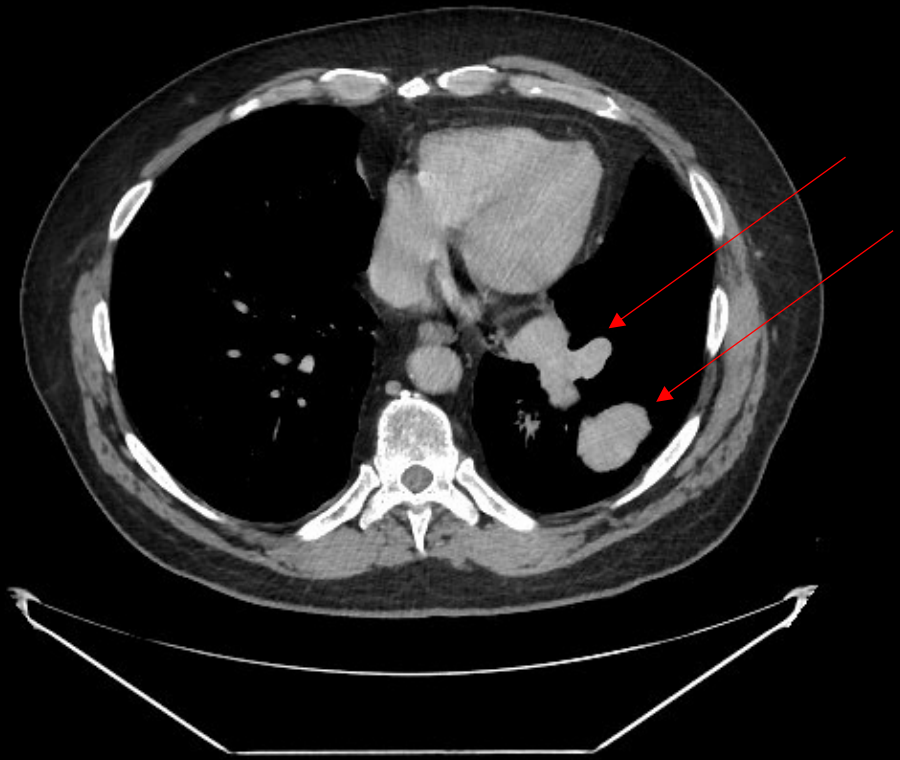
More investigations...

- CT guided chest biopsy showed no evidence of malignancy.

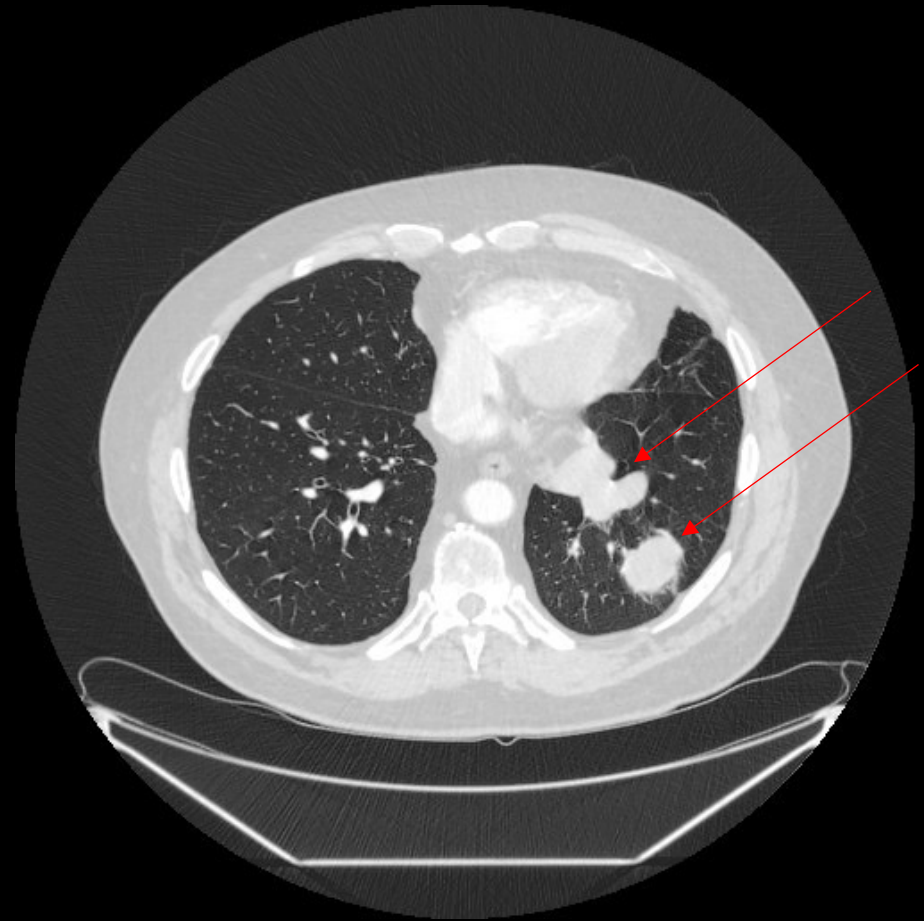
So, what are those lung lesions given each investigation done so far were negative for malignancy?

- The clinician later found out with further consultation that the patient had a road traffic accident back in 1967.
- He sustained a splenic and diaphragmatic injury as well as left haemothorax which has left him with persistent left lung scarring.
- Decision is eventually made to follow-up patient over the next three years.

Comparison of the follow-up CT three years later



Initial CT



3 years later

Final diagnosis = Thoracic Splenosis

- Thoracic splenosis refers to the rare autotransplantation of splenic tissue into the left hemithorax which typically occurs after trauma with combined diaphragmatic and splenic injuries.
- Patients are usually asymptomatic and thus, it is often an incidental finding on imaging performed for other reasons such as in this case.
- Management is expectant in almost all cases. Surgery is only indicated in occasional symptomatic patients or in situations where the diagnosis is doubtful, and malignancy cannot be confidently excluded.

Important take home messages

- Thoracic splenosis is a rare condition.
- History is crucial in making the diagnosis especially when there is a history of previous trauma with splenic and diaphragmatic injury.

References

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