

Focal nodular hyperplasia of the liver incidentally identified in a chiropractic patient with rib pain: A case report [Abstract]

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Indexing terms: Chiropractic; SOT; intercostal neuralgia; cholecystitis; liver; referral.



Objective:

To describe an adult male with focal nodular hyperplasia (FNH) of the liver mimicking right lower rib pain.

Clinical Features:

A 42-year-old male presented with right lower rib pain extending from the mid-sternal to the mid-axillary line. The pain was sharp, aching, and radiating. He had a history of liver laceration after blunt abdominal trauma 34 years prior.

Interventions/outcomes:

Murphy's sign was positive, and there was reduced and painful right lateral thoracic bending. Palpation of the anterior right lower ribs elicited epigastric pain. An Activator™ instrument-assisted adjustment was performed on rib 8, which did not relieve the pain.

The working diagnosis was intercostal neuralgia. The patient was referred for a sonographic examination of the gall bladder to discard acute cholecystitis. The sonogram revealed an incidental large hypervascular liver mass. Multiphase contrast abdominal computed tomography was performed to further characterise the lesion, demonstrating a mildly hyper-attenuating, and moderately enhancing 8.8 cm mass in the left lobe of the liver, with hypo-attenuating central scar, consistent with FNH.

Conclusion:

Remote trauma may predispose patients to developing painful visceral lesions that mimic musculoskeletal pain. Diagnostic imaging plays a crucial role in securing the diagnosis and directing appropriate management.

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About the practitioner



Ibis Melissa Roman Guzman DC is a graduate from Life University, with a Master's in Environmental Risk Management and Assessment and a Bachelor's in Biology with a concentration in Microbiology. Currently, she is a professor at the Universidad Central del Caribe and a chiropractor at the Hospital Regional de Castañer, having previously worked at Hospital Pavía de Arecibo as part of an interdisciplinary rehabilitation team. She is the founder and owner of Ibis Family Chiropractic, LLC, where she provides evidence-based chiropractic care. Additionally, she has conducted research on environmental microbiology and molecular techniques in collaboration with international academic institutions, with publications in scientific journals and presented at ACCRAC 2025.



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