Imaging of mediastinal masses

Mediastinum means standing in middle. Mediastinal masses include cystic and solid tumors. They may be benign or malignant. Occasionally, inflammatory lesions may also pose as tumors.

Radiologically mediastinum is identified and classified into three major portions particularly in the lateral view of plain radiographs. Several authors have given their own classification of mediastinum. However, Felson’s classification has been more popular and more practical. This classification is quite helpful in locating and identifying mediastinal masses to the extent of making a histological diagnosis. Although, conventional radiographs which include PA and lateral views serve to locate the masses in the major three compartments, advanced imaging such as MDCT and MRI provide a final diagnosis. However, the ultimate diagnosis is derived from a biopsy. Depending upon the compartment of the mediastinum different masses can be identified as mentioned in the following table.

Biography

Kakarla Subbarao is former director and vice chancellor of Nizam’s Institution of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, India. He is also former advisor to Govt. of AP in Health medicine and family welfare, former professor of radiology, Osmania Medical College, Hyderabad, India & Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, USA. Presently, he is Emeritus professor of radiology, Nizam’s Institution of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, Chairman, KIMS Foundation and Research Centre, Secunderabad, India and President of Musculoskeletal Society, India.

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