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Imaging-based Algorithmic Approach to Gallbladder Wall Thickening

Algorithmic Approach to Gallbladder Wall Thickening

Abstract

Gallbladder (GB) wall thickening is a frequent finding caused by a spectrum of conditions. It is observed in many extracholecystic as well as intrinsic GB conditions. GB wall thickening can either be diffuse or focal. Diffuse wall thickening is a secondary occurrence in both extrinsic and intrinsic pathologies of GB, whereas, focal wall thickening is mostly associated with intrinsic GB pathologies. In the absence of specific clinical features, accurate etiological diagnosis can be challenging. The survival rate in GB carcinoma (GBC) can be improved if it is diagnosed at an early stage, especially when the tumor is confined to the wall. The pattern of wall thickening in GBC is often confused with benign diseases, especially chronic cholecystitis, xanthogranulomatous cholecystitis (XGC), and adenomyomatosis (ADM). Early recognition and differentiation of these conditions can improve the prognosis. In this minireview, the authors describe the patterns of abnormalities on various imaging modalities (conventional as well as advanced) for the diagnosis of GB wall thickening. This paper also illustrates an algorithmic approach for the etiological diagnosis of GB wall

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Gallbladder wall thickening: Approach to diagnosis on imaging



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Thickening of the gallbladder wall is a relatively frequent finding at diagnostic imaging studies. Historically, a thick-walled gallbladder has been regarded as **proof of primary gallbladder disease**, and it is a well-known hallmark feature of **acute cholecystitis**.

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Pathology Gallbladder wall thickening can be caused by **inflammatory, benign, and malignant etiologies**. Pseudothickening caused by the no... **Thickening** of the **gallbladder wall**, usually considered >3 mm, is a non-specific sign of various conditions.

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