Ultrasonographic Atlas of Splenic Lesions

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Purposes

- To understand fundamentals of splenic ultrasonography
- To illustrate key imaging findings of splenic abnormalities in ultrasonography

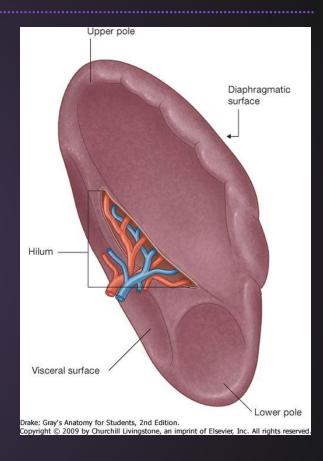
Contents

- Introduction
- Fundamentals of spleen imaging: special focus on US
- Anomalies and anatomic variants
- Non neoplastic diseases
- Infection and inflammatory diseases
- Benign neoplasms
- Malignant neoplasms
- Differential diagnosis



Spleen

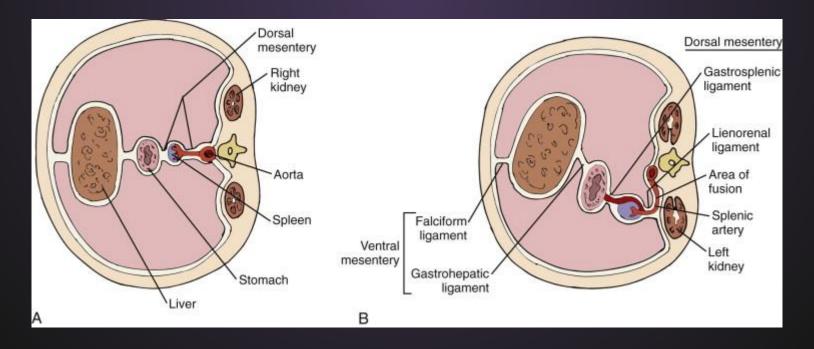
- Part of the mononuclear phagocytic system (formally known as reticuloendothelial)
- The largest lymphatic organ
- Length 10-12cm, weight 130~170g
- Red pulp
 - RBC, PLT metabolism
 - Monocyte reservation
- White pulp: immune response
 - Produce antibodies, macrophages, lymphocytes
 - Remove antibody-laden bacteria



Disease/absence of spleen: susceptible to various infections

Anatomy and Embryology

- GA 5th week: a condensation of mesenchymal cells from dorsal mesogastrium
 - Hematopoietic function in GA 4-8mo: lost with embryo development
 - Migration of lymphoid precursor cells: lymphocyte and monocyte production
- Location
 - Left upper abdomen, posterolateral to stomach, pancreas tail, and colic flexure
 - Between 9 and 12th ribs with its long axis in line with the 11th rib



Physiology

- Blood flow 150mL/min (=350L/day)
 - 4 10% directly into venous sinus
 - 90% through red pulp
- Selectively sequesters abnormal and aged RBC, WBC, PLT
- Remove viruses, bacteria, nuclear remnants (Howell-Jolly bodies), and parasites
- Initiation of humoral and cellular immune responses
 - Perfusion by blood rather than lymph of white pulp
 - Tuftsin: facilitate phagocytosis of leukocytes
 - immunoglobulin M antibody synthesis
- Blood storage: 200-250mL



FUNDAMENTALS OF SPLEEN IMAGING: SPECIAL FOCUS ON US

Radiography

- Moderate or massive splenomegaly
- Splenic calcifications
 - Granulomatous disease (tuberculosis, histoplasmosis, brucellosis)

Ultrasound

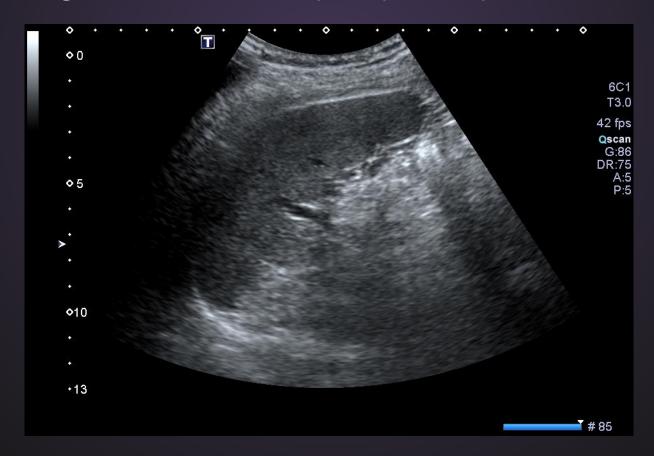
- Position: left anterior oblique, right lateral decubitus, prone
- A 3-5 MHz curved transducer
- Subcostal or oblique intercostal plane
 - The best window: 10th or 11th intercostal spaces, on the left midaxillary line
- Special US
 - Color Doppler: macrocirculation
 - Contrast-enhanced US (CEUS): both macro- and microcirculation in real-time
 - A high-frequency transducer and tissue harmonic imaging in the presence of a low mechanical index (MI)
 - Elastography

Ultrasound

- Homogeneous, mid- to low-level fine tissue echotexture punctuated by occasional bright echoes representing blood vessels
 - Slightly more echogenic than normal liver
 - Markedly more echogenic than normal renal parenchyma
- Size, shape, position of the hilum, relationship to the diaphragm, stomach, pancreas, and left kidney
- Detecting and characterizing focal lesions
- Estimating splenic size and volume

Normal Appearance on US

- Crescent shape, smooth outer convexity and nodulous inner margin
- Homogeneous and uniform parenchyma
- Slightly echogenic than normal hepatic parenchyma



Normal Appearance on US

CEUS

- Arterial (10–25 s): arterial splenic vessels
- ❖ Portal venous (30–120 s): homogeneous enhancement of parenchyma
- Late phases (over 120 s)

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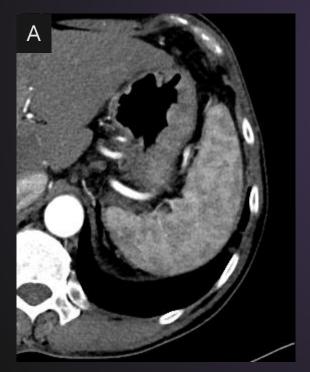
T1: 0:21

Gray-scale and CEUS of the spleen (dual examination)

- A) Arterial time (at 21 seconds after contrast agent administration) the arterial splenic vessels are seen
- P) Portal time (42 seconds), the splenic parenchyma becomes homogenously enhanced (also called the parenchymal time)

CT

- Early arterial mottled enhancement
 - Due to variable flow rates of the splenic red pulp
- Homogeneous in the portal venous phase



<u>Arterial phase</u> Mottled or striped enhanced pattern

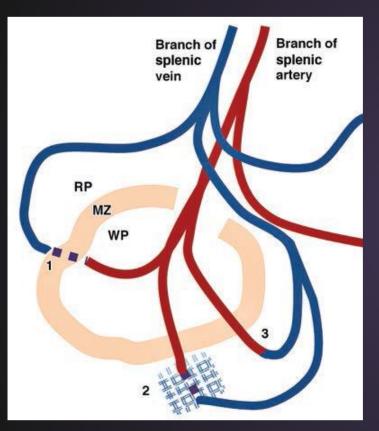


<u>Portal phase</u> Homogeneous enhancement



<u>Delayed phase (equilibrium phase)</u> Washout of contrast

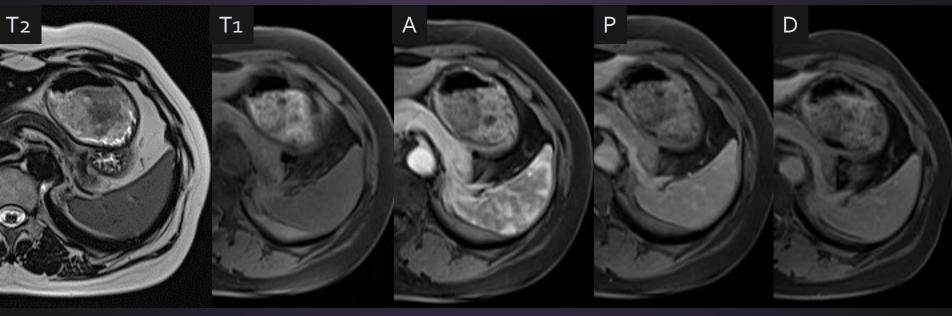
Heterogeneous enhancement: zebra pattern



- Due to variable flow rates of the splenic red pulp
- 1. Open system, low resistance, high flow
 - Arterioles terminate in marginal zone (MZ)
- 2. Open system, high resistance, slow flow
 - Arterioles cross marginal zone and end in reticular meshwork of red pulp (RP)
- 3. Closed system, low resistance, high flow
 - Drain directly into venous sinusoids in red pulp

MRI

- Low SI on T1WI
- High SI on T2WI
- Similar enhancement pattern as on CT



T2WI Homogeneously high SI

<u>T1WI</u> Homogeneously low SI

Arterial phase Mottled or striped enhancement

Portal phase
Homogeneous
enhancement

<u>Delayed phase</u> Washout of contrast



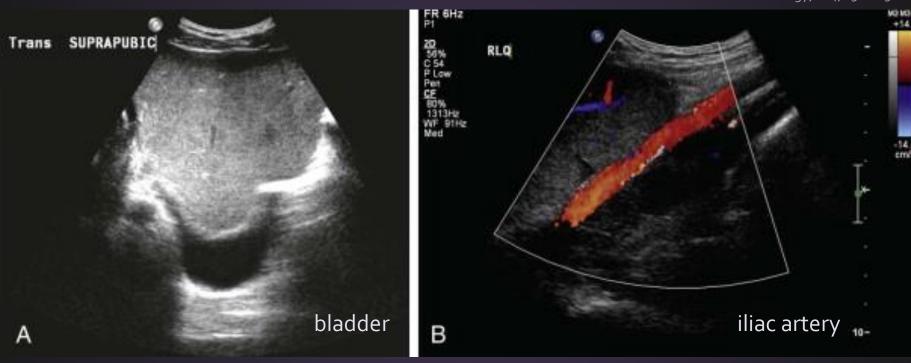
Wandering or Ectopic Spleen

- Migration of the spleen from its normal fixed posterolateral location in the left upper abdomen
- Normally anchored in the left upper abdomen
 - Gastrosplenic, splenorenal ligaments
- Congenital or acquired
- Solely attached by its vascular pedicle and can become a wholly intraperitoneal hypermobile organ

US

- Diagnosis, complications (torsion, infarction)
- Real time exam for hypermobility and twisting of vascular pedicle

Textbook of Gastrointestinal Radiology, 104, 1912-1922



Wandering spleen

- A) Transverse ultrasound image of the pelvis shows the spleen overlying the bladder
- B) Color Doppler image shows blood flow in the splenic parenchyma adjacent to the iliac artery

Accessory Spleen

- <2.5cm
- Congenital anomaly
 - * Failure of embryonic splenic buds to unite within the dorsal mesogastrium
 - Extreme lobulation of the spleen with pinching off of splenic tissue
- Splenic hilum, splenic ligaments, pancreas tail

Intrapancreatic accessory spleen can mimic pancreatic neoplasms, such

as hypervascular islet cell tumors







Splenomegaly

- Diffuse splenic enlargement (long axis length > 11~12cm)
- Congestive
 - Portal hypertension, splenic vein occlusion, congestive heart failure
- Hyperplastic
 - Hypertrophy due to removal of abnormal blood cells from the circulation (e.g., polycythemia vera)
- Inflammatory
 - Infection/inflammation: increase in the immune response with resultant lymphoid hyperplasia (e.g., infectious mononucleosis)
- Infectious
 - Splenic filtering of blood-borne pathogens, may lead to microabscess formation (e.g., mycobacterial infection)
- Infiltrative
 - Engorgement of macrophages with indigestible materials (e.g., Gaucher's disease, amyloidosis, malignant disease)



Gamna-Gandy Bodies

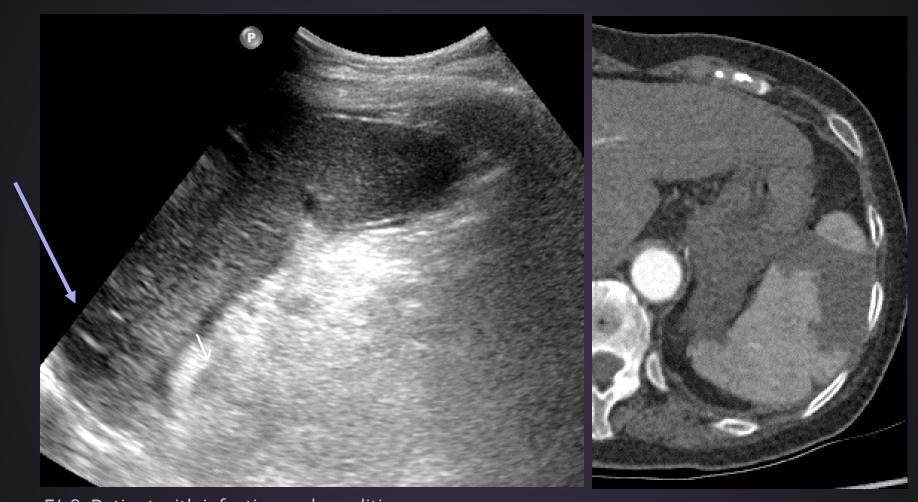
- Siderotic nodules caused by focal organized hemorrhagic infarcts
- Congestive splenomegaly, sickle cell disease, hemolytic anemia, leukemia, lymphoma, acquired hemochromatosis, multiple blood transfusions
- US: multiple, punctate, hyperechoic foci
- CT: multiple, faint, hyperdense nodules shown by the calcifications within them
- MRI: markedly hypointense nodules on T1, T2WI



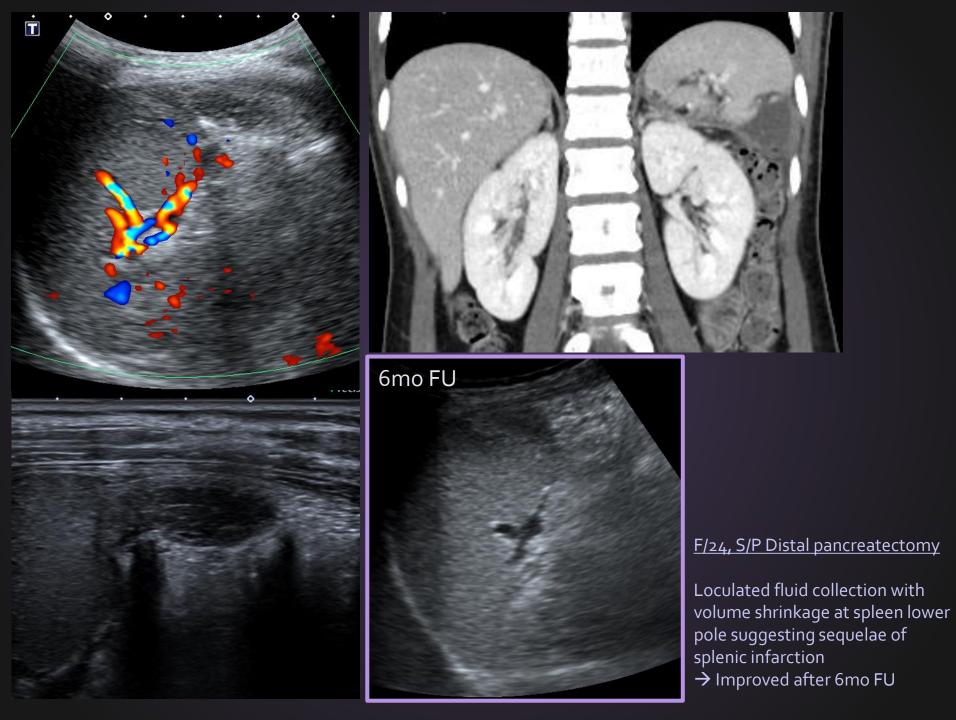
Gamna-Gandy bodies
Numerous tiny nodules throughout the spleen
CT) calcifications
US) echogenic nodules

Splenic Infarction

- Result of arterial or venous compromise
 - Branches of the splenic artery are end arteries
 - Segmental or massive
 - Many potential causes: hematologic disorders (m/c, <40yrs), thromboembolic disease (>40yrs), vascular diseases, trauma
- Complications (7-20%): abscesses, pseudocysts, hemorrhage, subcapsular hematoma, rupture
- Wedge-shaped area with the base at the splenic capsule and the apex pointing toward the hilum
- Multinodular or mottled appearance
- A masslike appearance with irregular margins
- US: single or multiple, wedge-shaped or round, variable echogenicity
 - Acute stage: hypoechoic, peripheral, and wedge shaped or round
 - Chronic stage: increased echogenicity that represent fibrotic scar



<u>F/78, Patient with infective endocarditis</u> Focal hypoechoic area in spleen, matched as wedge shaped low density area in CT, suggesting splenic infarction



Cystic Splenic Lesions

| Congenital | Epidermoid cysts (primary, true, mesothelial) Dermoid (rare) |
|------------|---|
| Acquired | Pseudocysts (secondary cysts): postinflammatory, post-traumatic, postinfar ction, pancreatic |
| Infection | Parasitic: echinococcosis Abscess: pyogenic, fungal |
| Neoplastic | Benign: cystic hemangioma, hamartoma, lymphangioma, peliosis Malignant: angiosarcoma, lymphoma, metastases |

Cystic Splenic Lesions

- Congenital cysts (epithelial cysts, epidermoid cysts)
 - Cysts lined with epithelial cells
 - US: well-defined hypoechoic mass
 - Low-level echoes: secondary to the deposition of cholesterol crystals
 - CT: difficult to differentiate from a pseudocyst
- Secondary cysts (pseudocysts)
 - After trauma, sequelae of prior hematoma
 - Not true cysts: lack of an inner endothelial lining
 - Fibrous wall ± wall calcifications, internal debris



M/83, About 4cm sized cyst in spleen upper pole



F/20, palpable abdominal mass

About 12cm*7.5cm sized well circumscribed cystic lesion in spleen with focal wall calcification and some lobulation, confirmed as epidermoid cyst



Peliosis of the Spleen

- Sinusoidal dilation and formation of multiple, cystlike, blood-filled cavities within the parenchyma
- M/C in the liver, any other organs including spleen
- Use of anabolic steroids, hematologic disorders, TB, AIDS, cancer
- Potential of surface lesions to rupture and cause life-threatening intraperitoneal hemorrhage
- US: multiple, poorly defined, hypoechoic lesions
 - Thrombosis: hyperechoic
- CT: multiple, small, well-defined, hypoattenuating, cystlike lesions
- MRI: SI depends on the age and status of the blood components



<u>F/3, splenomegaly</u>
Multiple poorly defined hypoechoic lesions throughout the spleen in US suggesting peliosis

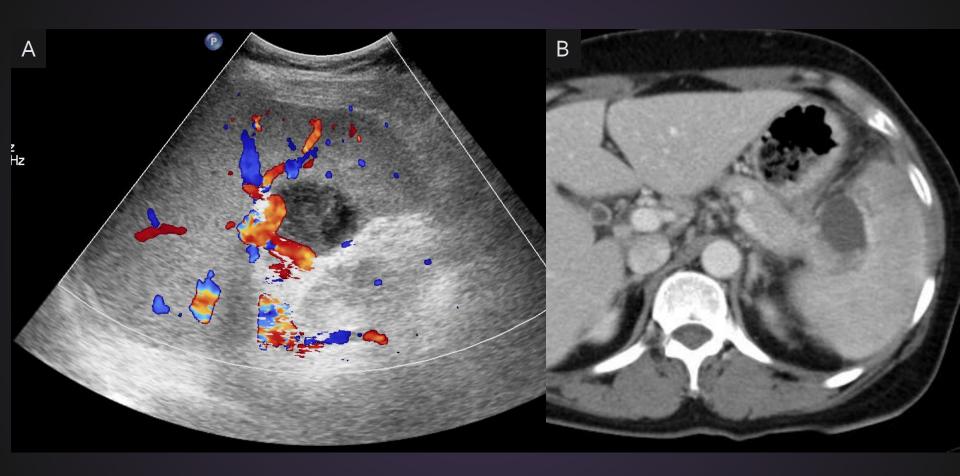


Pyogenic Abscess

- Hematogenous spread (m/c), penetrating trauma, prior splenic infarction
- US: poorly defined hypoechoic or cystic lesions
 - Typical: hypoechoic (pus or debris) with internal septations, little distal acoustic enhancement
 - Atypical: reverberation artifacts from gas, rarely echogenic

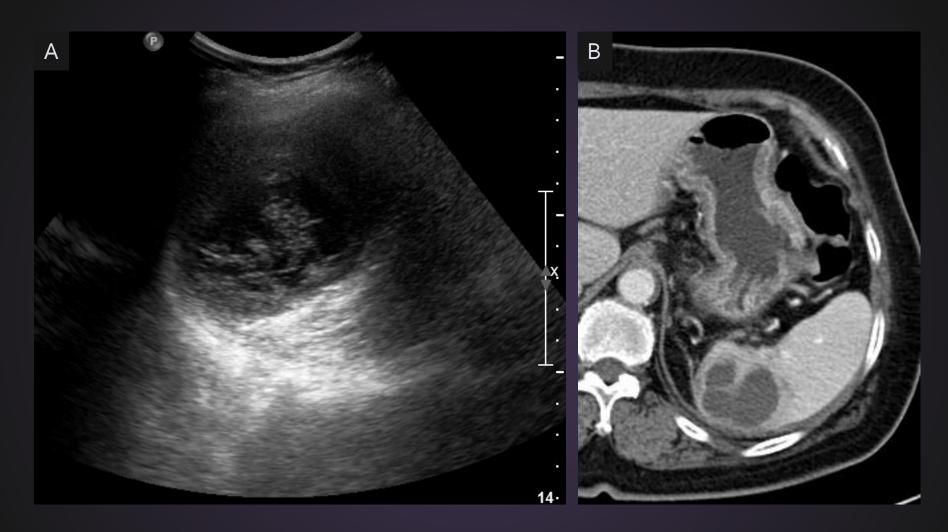
CT

- III-defined low-attenuation lesions with peripheral enhancement
- Internal air density, septations



F/60, abdominal pain

- A) Oval heterogeneous echoic lesion in splenic hilum suggesting an abscess, and *Klebsiella* pneumoniae was identified in US-guided aspiration
- B) Oval hypodense cystic lesion at splenic hilum



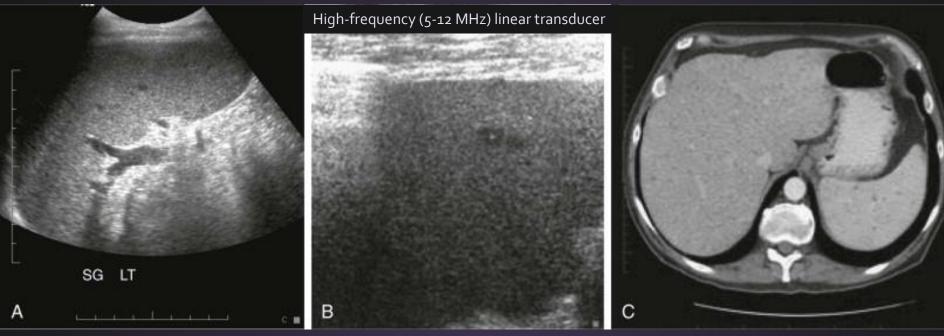
F/65, fever

A) Round hypoechoic lesion with echogenic internal debris suggesting an abscess, and Salmonella group D was identified in US-guided aspiration

B) Round multiseptated hypodense cystic lesion in spleen

Fungal Abscess and Microabscess

- Typically in immunocompromised patients with neutropenia
 - AIDS, chemotherapy, immunosuppressive agents, lymphoproliferative disorders
 - Candida (m/c), Aspergillus , Cryptococcus , Histoplasma
- Microabscesses: target or "bull's-eye" appearance similar to hepatic microabscesses
 - Peripheral hypoechoic zone of fibrosis
 - Echogenic second wheel of inflammatory cells
 - Central echogenic nidus containing necrosis and fungal elements
 - Late stage with healing: small and hyperechoic with various degrees of posterior acoustic shadowing, with or without calcification

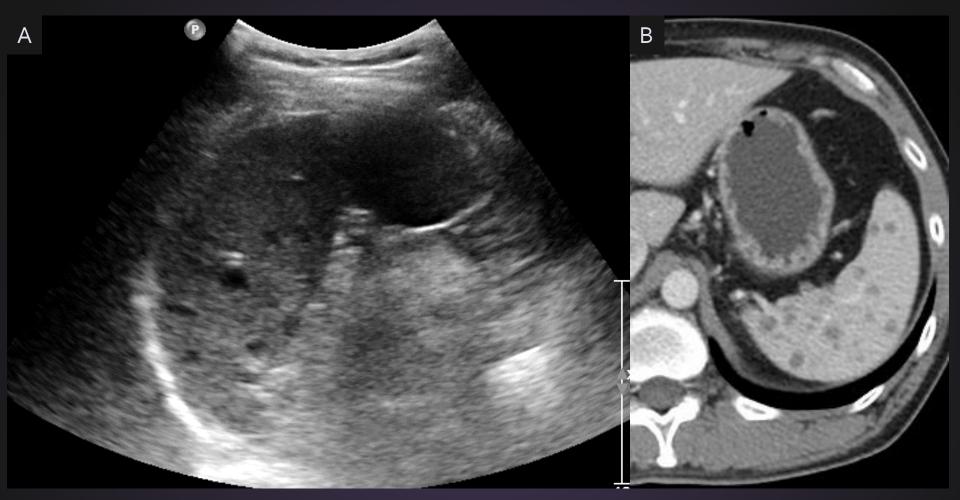


Disseminated Candida infection in a patient with acute myelogenous leukemia

- A) Transverse ultrasound image shows multiple, small, hypoechoic lesions in the splenic parenchyma
- B) Sonogram with a high-frequency (5-12 MHz) linear transducer demonstrates a small, hypoechoic nodule with a central echogenic nidus
- C) Contrast-enhanced CT shows numerous, subcentimeter, hypodense nodular lesions throughout the liver and spleen

Tuberculosis

- In the setting of disseminated, miliary infection
 - Spleen involvement in 80-100% at autopsy
- Multiple splenic nodules between 0.2 and 1 cm in diameter
- Associated lymphadenopathy



M/35, HIV (+), miliary TB

- A) Transverse ultrasound image shows multiple small (less than 1cm) hypoechoic lesions in the splenic parenchyma, and US guided biopsy confirmed AFB(+), *M.tuberculosis*
- B) Contrast-enhanced CT shows numerous, subcentimeter, hypodense nodular lesions throughout spleen

Sarcoidosis

- Systemic disease of unknown cause characterized by formation of noncaseating, epithelioid granulomas
- Splenomegaly, hepatomegaly, abdominal lymphadenopathy
- Nodules o.1 3.0 cm
- US: hypoechoic to slightly hyperechoic or inhomogeneous
- CT: hypodense, no enhancement
- MR: hypointense on all MR sequences

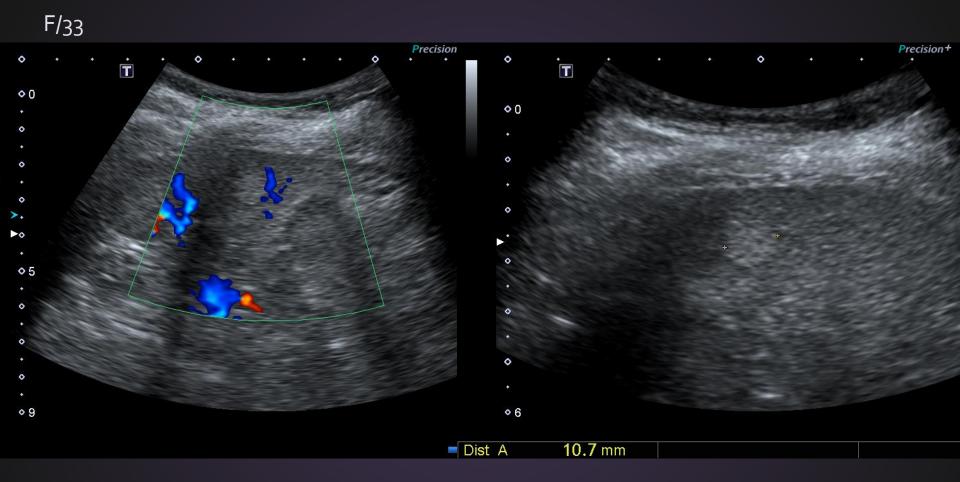


F/69, sarcoidosis
Numerous tiny ill defined hypodense lesions in spleen

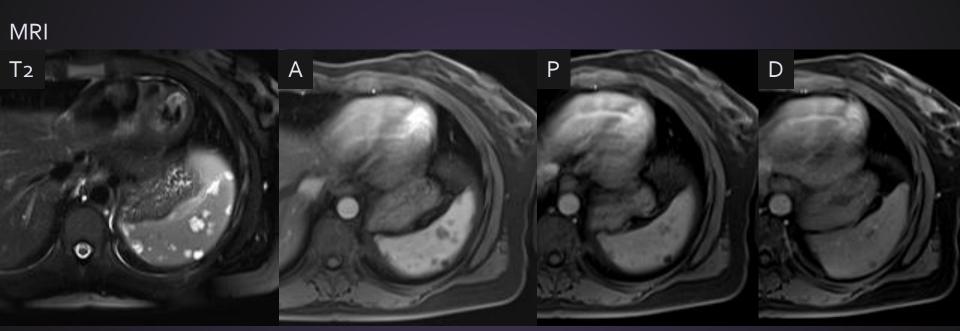


Hemangioma

- Most common benign neoplasm of the spleen
- Incidentally found
 - Infarction, thrombosis, hemorrhage, or fibrosis
 - Rarely rupture, malignant degeneration
- Hemangiomatosis: multiple or diffuse
- Spectrum from solid to mixed to purely cystic
- US
 - Small splenic hemangiomas appear as discrete echogenic lesions similar to those in the liver
 - Large hemangiomas may appear as complex masses with both solid and cystic areas
 - Acoustic shadowing due to calcifications may be seen
- CT: hypodense lesions with persistent enhancement
- MRI: high SI on T2WI, persistent enhancement on delayed images



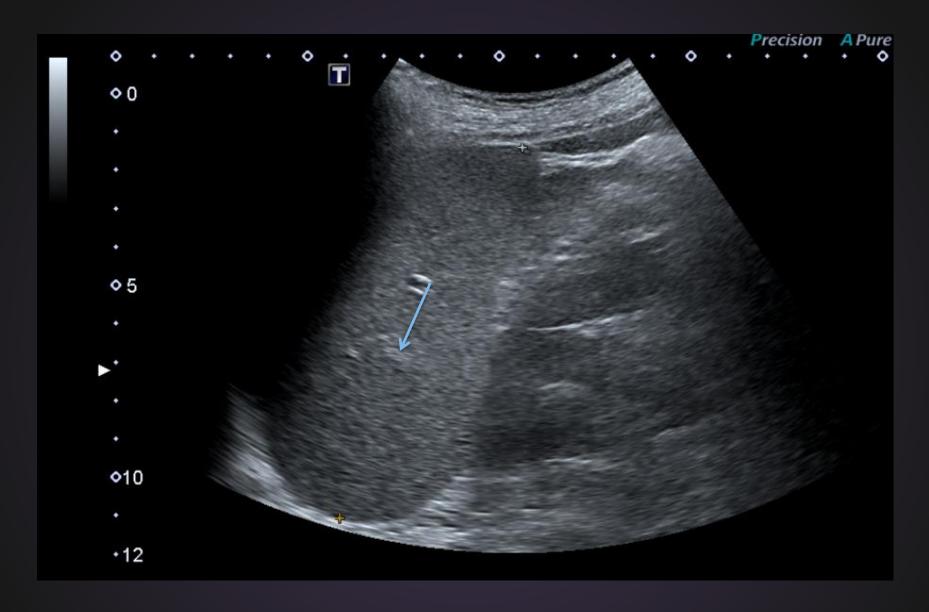
<u>F/33, incidental finding of spleen</u>
Multiple discrete round echogenic nodules in spleen with peripheral vascularity



F/33, incidental finding of spleen Multiple discrete round T2 high SI lesions with peripheral nodular and centripetal enhancement pattern suggesting hemangiomas

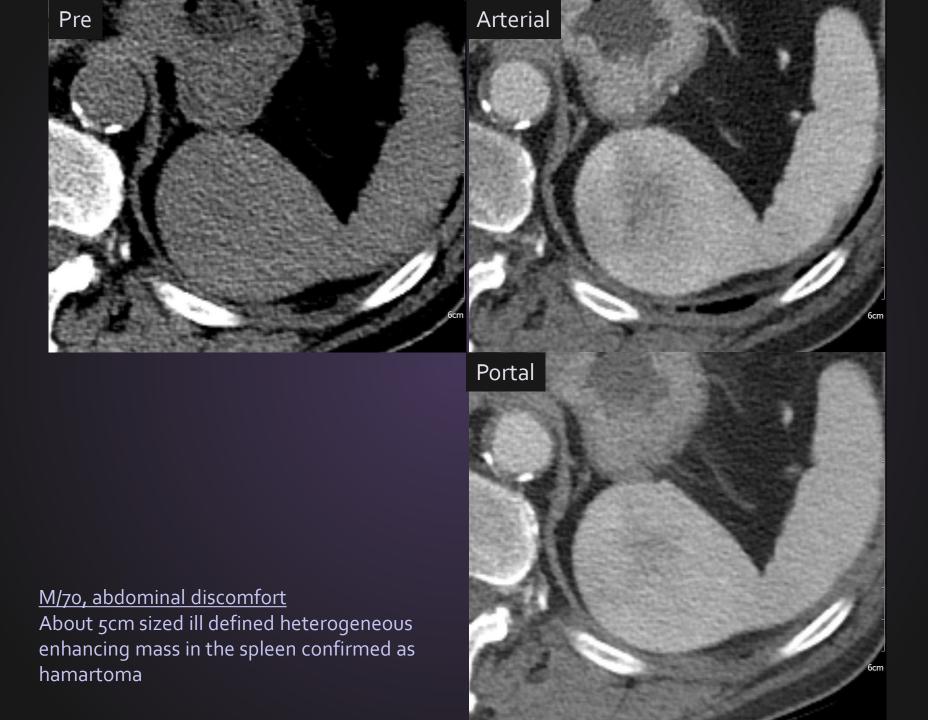
Hamartoma

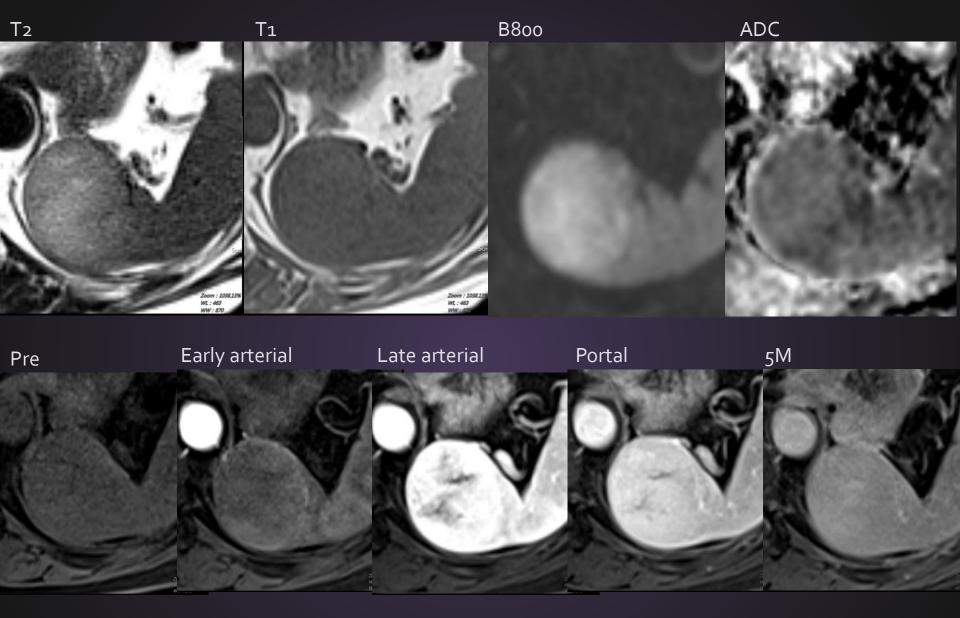
- A rare benign tumor
- A spleen within a spleen, post-traumatic scar, nodular hyperplasia, hyperplastic nodule
 - Disorganized red pulp elements with reticuloendothelial cell proliferation
- Associated disorders
 - Hematologic disorders (pancytopenia, anemia, thrombocytopenia)
 - Tuberous sclerosis and wiskott-aldrich-syndrome
- Expansile growth with compression of surrounding splenic tissue without a true capsule
- US: mostly hyperechoic, homogeneous and well-defined appearance
- CT: isodense, calcification, cystic/necrotic change, fat
- MRI: T1 iso SIT2 hyper SI, immediate diffuse heterogeneous enhancement



M/70, abdominal discomfort

About 5cm sized round slightly echogenic mass in spleen upper pole, confirmed as hamartoma



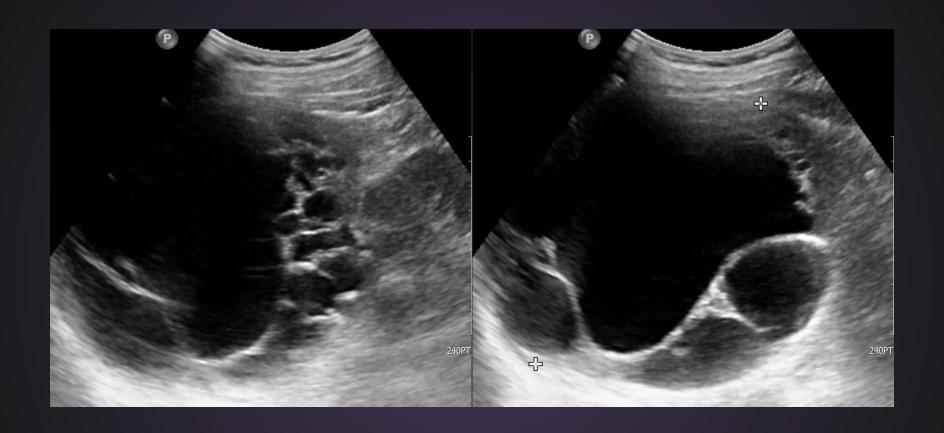


M/70, abdominal discomfort

About 5cm sized round T1 iso, T2 subtle high SI with centripetal enhancement pattern without significant restricted diffusion confirmed as hamartoma

Lymphangioma

- Benign, slow-growing, congenital neoplasm
- Typically seen in childhood
- Subcapsular, multicystic lesions filled with watery pink proteinaceous fluid
- US: multiple cysts (mm-cm) with thin septae, calcifications, various internal echoes depending on contents
- CT
 - Multiple discrete, nonenhancing low-attenuation lesions
 - Usually subcapsular in location
 - Curvilinear peripheral mural calcifications
- MR: well-circumscribed fluid SI lesions



F/74, incidental finding in spleen
About 12cm sized multiloculated cystic lesion in spleen upper pole





CT: multilobulated cystic mass in spleen with thin wall calcification

Multi-locular cystic change, filled with serous fluid and yellowish calcification in groos specimen, confirmed as lymphangioma

Sclerosing Angiomatoid Nodular Transformation

- A rare benign vascular tumor composed of multiple red pulp nodules made from endothelial cells interspersed with fibrous bands
- Associated with pancytopenia and ↑ESR
- US: hypoechoic mass
- CT: hypoattenuating mass with peripheral enhancing radiating lines (spoke-wheel appearance)
- MRI
 - T2WI: heterogeneous hypointense mass with hyperintense central scar
 - T1WI: heterogeneous hypointense mass with multiple peripheral enhancing radiating lines



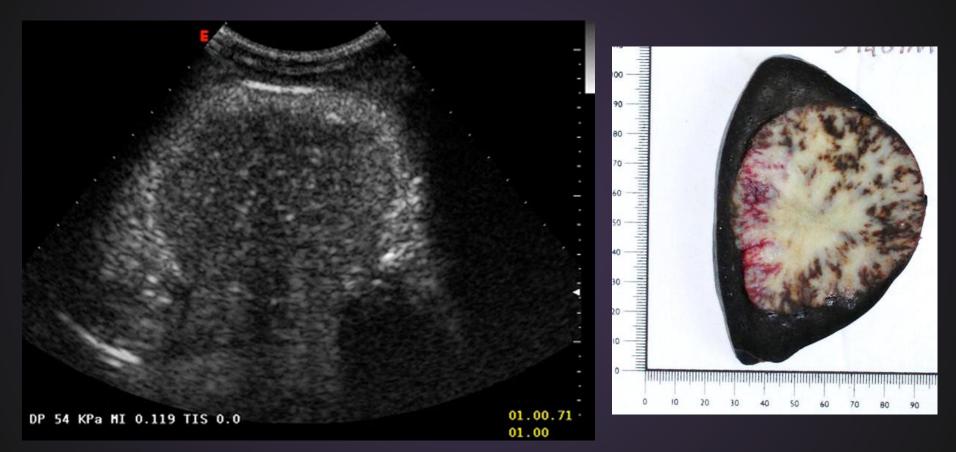
F/51, abnormal finding in abdomen US
About 5.2 x 3.9 cm sized well-defined oval high echoic mass abutting spleen, between spleen and left kidney.



Characteristic spoke-wheel appearance in the arterial phase and delayed fill-in suggesting sclerosing angiomatoid nodular transformation and central nonenhancing hypodense portion within the mass, suggesting central scar or necrosis

Inflammatory Pseudotumor

- Unusual, nonspecific, inflammatory reparative response to injury such as infection
- A mixture of inflammatory cells and a component of myofibroblastic spindle cells
- US: well-defined hypoechoic mass, acoustic shadowing on calcification
- CT
 - Well-circumscribed solitary low attenuation mass
 - Gradual filling of the lesion on delayed phase imaging
 - Central satellite area corresponding to fibrous plaque

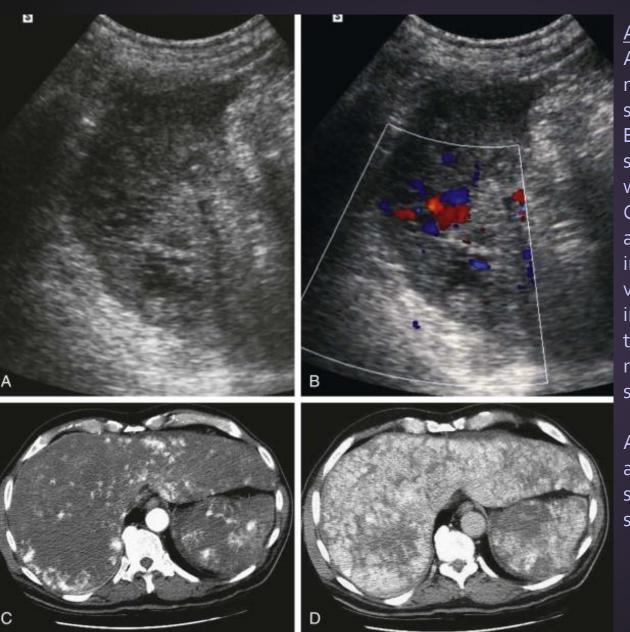


F/28, epigastric discomfort
Hypoechoic round mass in spleen confirmed as inflammatory pseudotumor



Angiosarcoma

- M/C primary nonhematopoietic malignant tumor of the spleen
 - Arises from the endothelial lining of splenic blood vessels
- Well-defined mass or diffusely infiltrative
- Clinical presentation: LUQ pain, anemia, thrombocytopenia
- US: splenomegaly and numerous, solid, ill-defined masses with a heterogeneous architecture
- CT: multiple, ill-defined, hypervascular masses with heterogeneous contrast enhancement and areas of necrosis
 - Intrasplenic, subcapsular, or perisplenic hemorrhage

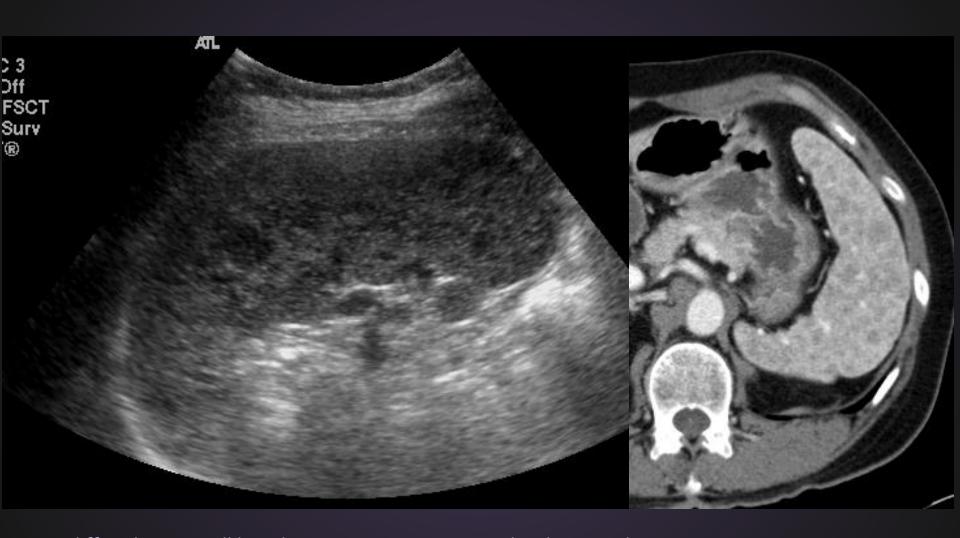


Angiosarcoma of liver and spleen A) Ultrasound demonstrates a normal-sized, inhomogeneous spleen with a few cystic areas B) Color flow is demonstrated in some of these areas, consistent with vascular lakes C,D) CT after intravenous administration of contrast material in the arterial phase (C) and portal venous phase (D) shows many irregular areas of enhancement in the liver and spleen and areas of relatively low attenuation in the spleen

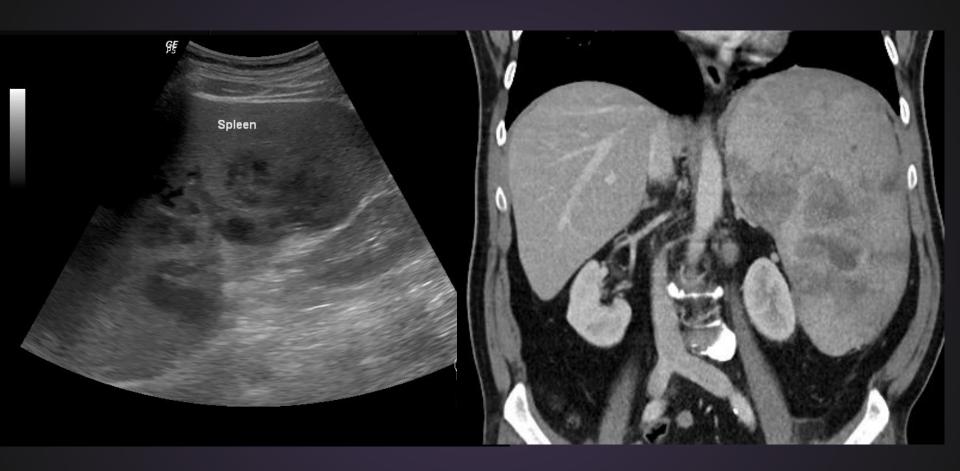
Autopsy revealed multiple angiosarcomas involving the spleen and liver (unknown primary site)

Lymphoma

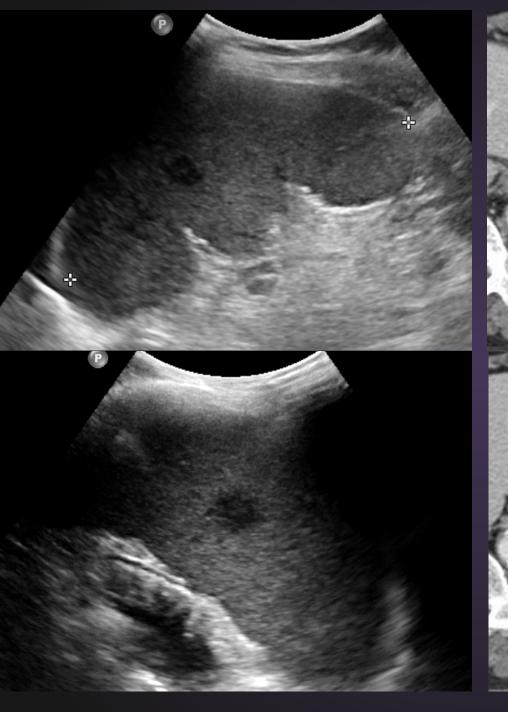
- M/C malignant tumor of spleen
- Patterns of involvement
 - Homogeneous enlargement without masses
 - Miliary masses (<5 mm): follicular, mantle cell lymphoma
 - Multiple solid masses of various sizes
 - A large, solitary mass (>5 cm): large cell lymphoma
- US: splenomegaly with a normal echotexture, hypoechoic masses
- CT: low attenuation best seen on portal venous phase
- MRI
 - T1WI : low to intermediate SI
 - T2WI: mild to moderate high SI
 - Hypoenhancing to background splenic parenchyma

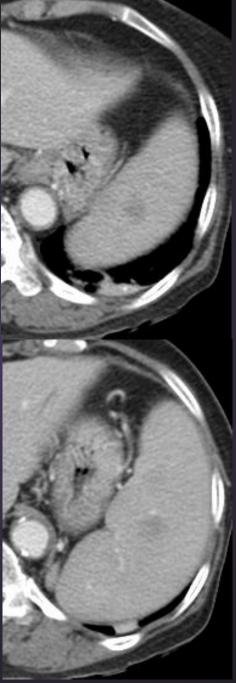


F/56, diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) patient with spleen involvement
Numerous conglomerated hypodense nodules are noted in the entire spleen with resulting splenomegaly



M/58, left flank pain and weight loss in DLBCL patient
Huge splenomegaly with multiple poorly defined mass like lesions combined with multifocal infarction, biopsy confirmed DLBCL involvement

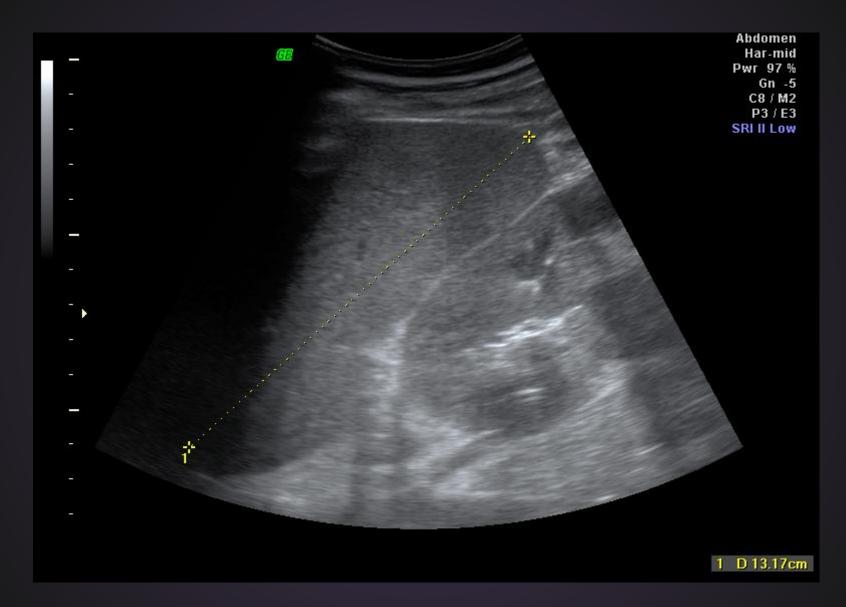




F/76, DLBCL patient
Splenomegaly with illdefined low density
lesions confirmed as
DLBCL involvement

Leukemia and Myeloproliferative Disorders

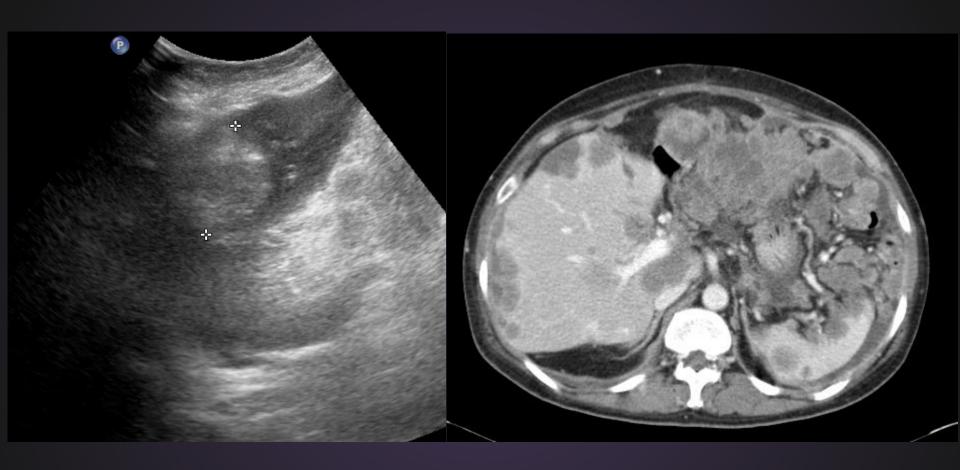
- Mainly affect the red pulp
- Splenomegaly
- US: often hyperechoic focal lesions (unlike lymphoma)



M/36 Acute myeloid leukemia Splenomegaly

Metastasis

- Most commonly present with solitary or multiple nodules
- Melanoma (34%), breast (12%), ovary (12%), colon (10%), lung (9%)
- US: variable appearance
 - Hypoechoic (50%), mixed, cystic, a target or halo appearance
 - Hyperechoic: melanoma, colon cancer
- CT: ill-defined, hypodense, rounded lesions
- MRI: T1 low SI, T2 high SI, various enhancement



F/48, rectal cancer patient with multiple metastases and peritoneal carcinomatosis Several round echogenic nodules and masses in spleen suggesting metastases



Diffuse abnormal echogenicity

| In | ncreased | Decreased |
|--|----------|---|
| Polycythemia Sarcoidosis Leukemia Tuberculosis Malaria Brucellosis | | Congestion from portal hypertension Leukemia Lymphoma Multiple myeloma |

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|-----|---|----|
| IVI | a | 33 |

| Hypoechoic | Echogenic | Heterogeneous |
|---|---|---|
| Hamartoma Hemangioma Cysts Lymphangiomatosis Lymphoma Metastases Abscess Septic emboli Infarction Granulomatous disease (TB, sarcoidosis) Splenic artery aneurysm | Hereditary spherocytosis Chronic infarction Hematoma Metastases Calcified granulomas Plasmacytoma | Hematoma Abscess Infarction Angiosarcoma Hemangioma Hemangiosarcoma |

| Normal echogenicity | Echogenic | Hypoechoic | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Congestion from portal hypertension Myelogenous leukemia Infection Sickle cell disease (early) Hereditary spherocytosis Hemolysis Still's disease Felty's syndrome Wilson's disease Polycythemia Myelofibrosis | Leukemia Lymphoma Malaria Tuberculosis Brucellosis Sarcoidosis Polycythemia Hereditary spherocytosis Portal vein thrombosis Dysgammaglobulinemia Myelofibrosis Hematoma Metastases | Noncaseating granulomatous infection Lymphoma Multiple myeloma Chronic lymphocytic leukemia Congestion from portal hypertension | | | |

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