

Chest X-ray quiz

Answer and discussion

This probably shows the typical appearance of old chickenpox pneumonia. Note the numerous bilateral calcified intrapulmonary calcified nodules. Chickenpox pneumonia in adulthood can cause the development of numerous calcified nodules. Corne, Carroll, Brown & Delany (1997) suggest that to determine that this is the likely diagnosis is to:

1. Look at the distribution of the nodules. In chickenpox pneumonia they tend to be lower and midzone
2. Look at the density of the nodules. They are calcified and so should be very white in appearance
3. Look at their size. They are usually less than 3 mm in diameter
4. Look at the number. In chickenpox pneumonia you would expect to see less than 100 nodules. The diagnosis should be questioned if there are obviously a lot more nodules.

Causes of numerous calcified nodules

Infection e.g. Tuberculosis, histoplasmosis, chickenpox

Inhalation, e.g. silicosis

Chronic renal failure

Lymphoma following radiotherapy

Chronic pulmonary venous hypertension in mitral stenosis (Corne, Carroll et al, 1997)

Reference

Corne J, Carroll M, Brown I, & Delany D. (1997) *Chest X-Ray Made Easy*. New York. Churchill Livingstone

For question see page 16 of this issue.

