

Pathology corner: Answer

Diagnosis: Warthin's tumor

Description

1. **Macroscopy:** Encapsulated, Solid yellowish brown mass with small cysts (white arrows)

2. **Microscopy:**

Circle: Normal salivary gland tissue

Blue arrow: lymphoid tissue

Yellow arrow: oncocytic epithelium

Salivary gland tissue (seen within the circle) with a lymphoepithelial neoplasm- the epithelial component (yellow arrows) is seen as papillary, tubuloglandular and cystic structures lined by double layered brightly eosinophilic epithelium. The deep eosinophilic and granular nature is due to the abundance of mitochondria in these cells. The stroma shows dense lymphocyte infiltration even forming germinal centres and surrounds the epithelial structures

Discussion

Also known as papillary cystadenoma lymphomatosum or adenolymphoma. The latter term is better avoided in view of its confusion with a lymphoma.

This tumor has many distinguishing features:

1. Almost always occurs in the parotid gland
2. More common in the elderly age group, more often in men and smokers

3. The second commonest benign tumor of the salivary gland (first being pleomorphic adenoma or benign mixed tumor)
4. Commonest salivary gland neoplasm having multifocal and bilateral occurrence. The other gland may be involved simultaneously or metachronously
5. Encapsulated or well circumscribed, tan brown cut surface with cysts in many cases (Not prominent in this case).
6. Highly characteristic histology- bilayered epithelium forming glandular, papillary and cystic structures with heavy lymphoid stroma, even forming germinal centres.
7. Epithelium is deeply eosinophilic (oncocytic- rich in mitochondria) and granular

There are 2 views regarding its histogenesis: First, it develops from salivary tissue sequestered within intraparotid lymph nodes. Second, it arises by induction of cystic and oncocytic changes by inflammatory infiltrate in the gland

Prognosis: It is a benign tumor with minimal chances for recurrence. Very rare incidences of malignant transformation have been reported

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