Do incidental findings on planning CT-angiograms for endovascular repair affect clinical management?

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Introduction

Dr Bevan and the CT angiography team at the Great North Elizabethan Centre for Cardiovascular Science, Newcastle upon Tyne, suggest that many labs will jointly launch their 2015-2020 strategic plan. After previous National Health Service agreements, the aim of this project, the Royal Institution, and the Society of Radiologists, is to understand the impact of significant incidental findings detected during CT angiography.

Methods

A retrospective study of all CTA scans of the abdominal aorta spanning a 2 year period assessed the frequency, nature and impact of significant incidental findings discovered on CT-angiograms (CTA) and their effects on EVAR planning in patient with AAA. The data were compared against the National Health Service and the Society of Radiologists' key criteria for incidental findings.

Results

No incidental findings (0) were identified in 138 patients (31.6%) based on the aorta and its branches. The mean age of the patient was 71 ± 5 years (range 50–88). The prevalence of significant findings (SFF) was 96 patients (21.3%) with SFFs in men (n = 54, 35.6%) and women (n = 42, 25.4%).

Conclusions

These results indicate that CT angiography is a safe and effective technique for the detection of significant incidental findings in patients undergoing EVAR. The findings suggest that CT angiography may have important implications for patient management and should be considered when planning EVAR.