

The role of radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy in extremity lymphedema

Zhibin YUAN, Libo CHEN, Quanyong LUO, Jifang ZHU, Hankui LU and Ruisen ZHU

*Nuclear Medicine Department, Shanghai 6th People's Hospital,
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, P.R. China*

The characteristics of lymphedema on radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy were studied, and the diagnostic value of radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy in lymphedema was evaluated. In this report radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy was performed in 110 cases of clinically suspected lymphedema. A retrospective study method was used to analyze the imaging results. The typical pattern of lymphedema on radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy was summarized. It was found that the characteristics of lymphedema on radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy were diverse. The most common pattern was increased radiotracer accumulation in the soft tissue and lymphatic webs. Surgery and infection dominated as the causes of lymphedema in this study. It was concluded that radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy is a useful noninvasive method for diagnosing lymphedema. It is easy to operate and provides reliable results.

Key words: radionuclide lymphoscintigraphy, lymphedema, ^{99m}Tc dextran