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Papillary Clusters in an Aspiration Biopsy of a Cervical Lymph Node

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Figure 1: Hyperchromatic cohesive groups showing branched pattern (Smear, Diff Quik, 4X)

Figure 2: Higher magnification of a cluster of cells showing nuclear inclusions and grooves (Smear, Diff Quik, 40X)

Figure 3: Higher magnification of a cluster of cells showing nuclear inclusions and grooves (Smear, H&E staining, 40X)

Figure 4: Higher magnification of isolated single cells showing nuclear inclusions. Note that some of the cells have plasmacytoid appearance (ThinPrep, Papanicolaou staining, 40X)

Figure 5: Higher magnification of isolated single cells showing nuclear inclusions. Note that some of the cells have plasmacytoid appearance (ThinPrep, Papanicolaou staining, 40X)

Disclosure: We do not have any affiliations or financial interests in any of the corporate organizations involved with the products to which my case study will refer.

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Clinical History

A 44-year old male presented with severe diarrhea for four years with weight loss of 60 lbs. over 1 ½ years. The patient was diagnosed at an outside institution with irritable bowel disorder/syndrome after a GI work-up. He underwent additional studies, which revealed thyroid and lung nodules. An ultrasound of the thyroid gland showed a suspicious nodule measuring 5.2 x 2 x 2.3 cm in the right lobe and suspicious right level 2, level 3, and level 4 cervical lymph nodes. A CT scan of the chest showed multiple irregular bilateral pulmonary nodules, which were consistent with metastases. Mediastinal and right hilar lymphadenopathy was also present. A fine needle aspiration biopsy (FNA) of the right neck lymph node was performed for a diagnostic work-up.

Cytopathology Features

The FNA specimen revealed many cohesive groups with branched arrangement (*Figure 1*). The cells were relatively small with round to ovoid shape. The cells had scant to moderate cytoplasm with high nuclear to cytoplasmic (N/C) ratio. Additionally, nuclear inclusions and grooves were noted in many cells (*Figures 2 to 5*).



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