

Excruciating Thigh Pain and Hepatic Air Collection

(See pages 1644–5 for the Answer to the Photo Quiz)

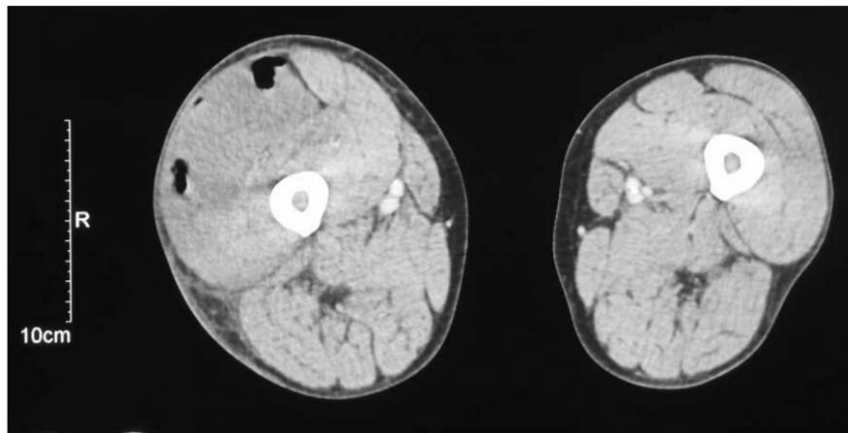


Figure 1. CT of the proximal thighs

A 66-year-old man with adenocarcinoma of the right-sided colon with synchronous hepatic metastases received primary chemotherapy. On day 20 of the fourth chemotherapy cycle, the patient presented to the emergency department with excruciating bilateral thigh pain. The pain progressed rapidly, resulting

in almost complete immobilization. Physical examination revealed no pathological signs on the legs or in the region of the lower back. Skin color, feet pulse, and neurological findings were normal. Serological analysis indicated a C-reactive protein level of 280 mg/L (normal level, <9 mg/L) and a creatinine

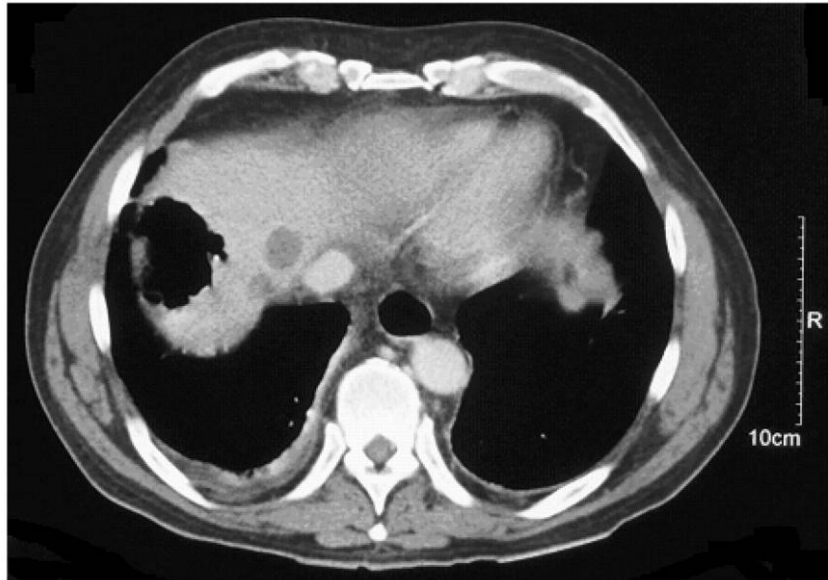


Figure 2. CT of the abdomen

kinase level of 488 U/L (normal level, <170 U/L). Urine dipstick showed significant hematuria; microscopic examination of urine samples showed no erythrocytes. Four hours after admission to the emergency department, a livid skin discoloration suddenly appeared on the right thigh. Fasciotomy of the left upper and lower leg muscles was performed immediately. The

findings of histological examination were consistent with muscle necrosis involving large, gram-positive rod bacteria. CTs of the proximal thighs and of the abdomen are shown in figures 1 and 2.

What is your diagnosis?