X-RAY FILM OF THE MONTH

Clinical Information


ANSWER—Dextroversion of the Heart

This is a congenital variation in which the heart is rotated into the right thorax. The cardiac chambers retain their normal relationship to each other and the aortic knob and descending aorta lie in normal position. In some cases a film made with the patient rotated about 10 degrees into the right anterior oblique position will give the appearance of a normal heart as ordinarily seen in the true anteroposterior projection.

Differentiation from total situs inversus is easily made from the normal position of the aortic knob and the abdominal viscera. Isolated dextrocardia, in which the chambers are reversed, is nearly always associated with severe symptomatic cardiac anomalies and an abnormal electrocardiogram. In dextroposition of the heart resulting from pulmonary collapse or emphysema or from deformities of the thoracic cage the abnormality causing the right-sided cardiac shadow is generally obvious. As a general rule, dextroversion represents an incidental but confusing finding.

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SELECTED REFERENCES


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