Clinical Information

The patient is an asymptomatic 17 year-old Caucasian boy with a mass related to the anterior aspect of the left hemidiaphragm found on routine pre-employment chest x-ray film.

**FIGURE 1**

*Diagnosis: PERICARDIAL CYST*

This is thought to represent a pericardial cyst, uncommon in this location. Three-fourths of pericardial cysts are found on the right side.¹

The differential diagnosis of the demonstrated mass is essentially that of a supradiaphragmatic mass. Intradiaphragmatic tumors are quite rare, there having been only 67 cases reported in the literature.² Supradiaphragmatic masses are produced by lesions of the pleura—cyst, neoplasm, loculated effusion, fibrin ball, loculated empyema, pericardial fat pad; of the lung—lobar sequestration, cyst, abscess, neoplasm; of the pericardium—cyst, neoplasm; of the esophagus—enteric cyst, reduplication, neoplasm; and of the thoracic wall—neoplasm, infection.

Diagnostic pneumoperitoneum is a simple and useful procedure in excluding herniation of subdiaphragmatic structures into the thorax (Fig. 2). Pneumoperitoneum may be combined with diagnostic pneumothorax to further define intradiaphragmatic or supradiaphragmatic lesions.
At thoracotomy, a cyst was found in the pleural space, attached by a fibro-adipose pedicle to the adjacent pericardium and diaphragmatic pleura anteriorly. Grossly, the specimen consisted of a 9 x 5 cm. smooth, thin-walled, bi-lobed cyst containing watery fluid. Microscopically, a fibrous cystic wall with mesothelial lining was found, with no evidence of inflammatory process or malignancy.

REFERENCES


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