

Myelophthisis as first manifestation of failure of chemotherapy in breast cancer

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Myelophthisis is a form of bone marrow failure due to the substitution of hematopoietic tissue and its stroma by abnormal tissue^(1,2). We report a case of a 38-year-old woman under investigation for bicytopenia during maintenance chemotherapy (tamoxifen) for breast cancer (diagnosed 3 years previously). Her physical examination was unremarkable except for pallor. There was no hepatosplenomegaly, lymphadenopathy or breast lesions. Laboratory tests showed normochromic and normocytic anemia (Hb 9.1 g/dL) and thrombocytopenia ($117 \times 10^9/L$). A peripheral blood smear showed a typical leukoerythroblastic picture. Bone marrow aspiration (with resistance) and biopsy revealed extensive infiltration by breast ductal carcinoma.

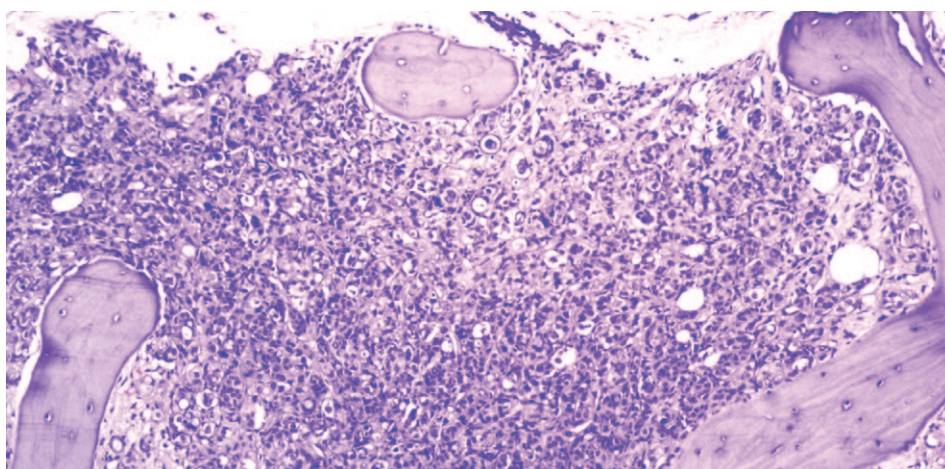


Figure 1 - Bone marrow replaced with metastatic breast ductal carcinoma, H&E stain, original magnification 200X

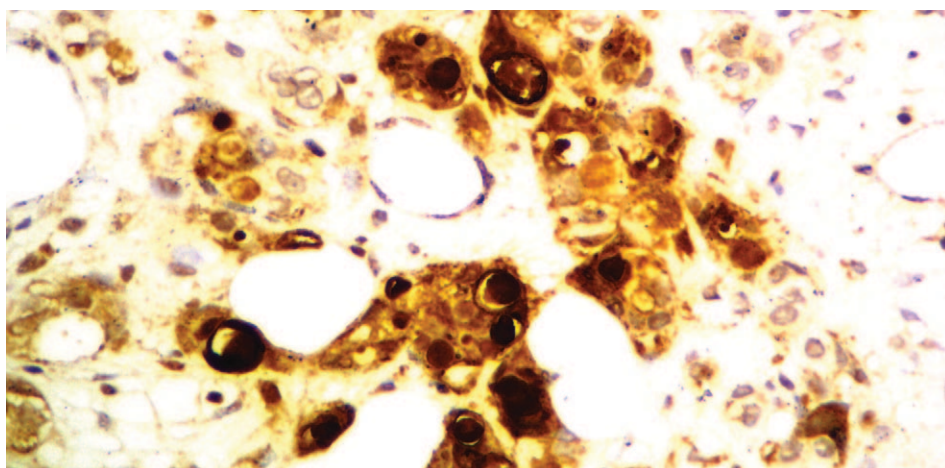


Figure 2 - GCDFP-15 positive breast ductal carcinoma metastatic to bone marrow, immunohistochemistry, original magnification 400X

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