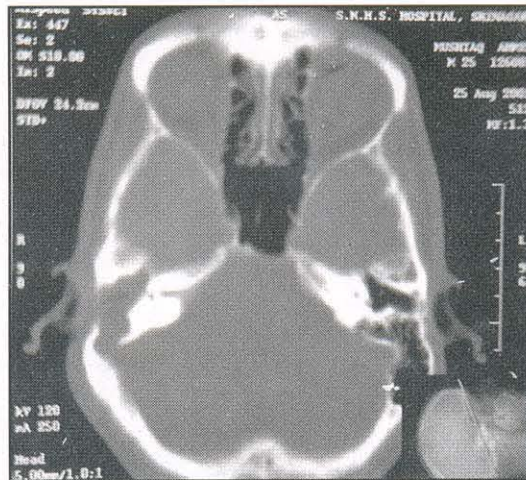


Cholesteatoma Eroding Cortex and Sinus Plate

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Cholesteatoma is an intratympanic sac of squamous epithelium capable of eroding the surrounding bone. It may erode the cortex of mastoid bone and present as post aurial abscess as is usually the case. Occasionally, however, it may erode the thin plate of bone separating the mastoid from middle or posterior cranial fossa.

Figure given show CT head (bone window) at the level of the petrous bone showing lytic lesion involving right petrous bone. Soft tissue mass is seen filling the tympanic cavity and mastoid air cells eroding the overlying cortex. The sinus plate-thin bone separating mastoid from posterior cranial fossa is eroded (soft tissue mass of cholesteatoma was replacing the sigmoid sinus in this case). Left mastoid cells are pneumatized and are available for comparison. Left sinus plate is intact.

CT scan has a clear advantage because of its ability to identify soft tissue masses. Early diagnosis of cholesteatoma and its complications can best be made by high resolution CT scan. It can demonstrate pathology hidden from otological examination.

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