Extrapericardial cardiac tamponade by a retrosternal haematoma after blunt chest trauma

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A 40-year old male presented with an epigastric pain after being hit by a heavy burden. Chest computed tomography revealed the presence of a huge retrosternal haematoma with cardiac tamponade (Fig. 1). The haematoma was removed through a median sternotomy and we confirmed bleeding from a left internal mammary artery.

Funding

This work was supported by grants from the Catholic University of Korea, College of Medicine.

Keywords: Cardiac tamponade • Haematoma • Mediastinal disease • Internal mammary artery

Figure 1: Chest computed tomography demonstrates a huge retrosternal haematoma with a focus of active bleeding just posterior to the sternum compressing the mediastinal structure (arrow). The blood pressure was 80/40 mmHg, with a pulse rate of 140 beats/min. The patient underwent immediate surgical exploration. The postoperative course was uneventful.