

Evidence Discussion: Soft Tissue Mass (MS-10.1)

- After a relevant history and physical exam that does not define the etiology of a subcutaneous lesion, plain radiographs are indicated. A plain film may show a benign soft tissue or bone lesion as the etiology and no advanced imaging would be necessary. If plain film is non-diagnostic, it could better direct initial imaging to the correct modality. Furthermore, plain x-ray may provide complementary information to advanced imaging allowing a better interpretation.
- Clearly benign findings on exam (lipoma, ganglion, sebaceous cyst) do not need additional imaging prior to treatment unless the imaging was necessary for surgical management or for a possible malignancy.
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a superior modality for evaluation of soft tissue masses but Computed Tomography (CT) is appropriate for contra-indications to CT. Ultrasound can be useful following plain radiograph to further characterize a mass or better delineate extent and origin of the lesion.

References:

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