

Conference Abstracts

Vol. 6, Issue Supplement 2, 2026

Carcinoma Cuniculatum Unmasked: Hidden Cancer Masquerading as Benign Chronic Sacro-Gluteal Sinus

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Keywords: Carcinoma Cuniculatum, Chronic gluteal sinus, SCC

Submission received: 2026-08-28 / Accepted: 2026-08-30 / Published: 2026-09-24

<https://doi.org/10.53876/001a.129898>

Abstract

Background

Carcinoma cuniculatum (CC) is a rare variant of well differentiated squamous cell carcinoma with a characteristic burrowing growth pattern and indolent clinical course. Classically plantar, they may involve unusual sites, eg. sacro-gluteal area, mimicking benign chronic sinuses.

Methods

A 62-year-old diabetic male presented with a 3-year history of a non-healing discharging sinus in the right gluteal region. It was initially suspected to be infective. Multiple cultures and superficial biopsies were nondiagnostic. MRI demonstrated

complex sinus tracts extending into the subcutaneous tissue. Wide local excision with 2 cm margins was performed due to the chronicity and atypical features. Histopathologic evaluation showed a deeply infiltrative, keratinizing squamous tumor with characteristic keratin-filled tunnels and minimal cytologic atypia consistent with carcinoma cuniculatum. The postoperative course was unremarkable and the patient was disease free at the 2-year follow-up.

Conclusion

Carcinoma cuniculatum should be suspected in chronic sacrogluteal sinuses unresponsive to usual therapy. Diagnosis and cure require deep excision and histopathological evaluation. Awareness can prevent long-term morbidity.

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