Radiological correlation of MRI findings with histopathological diagnosis in Diagnosing Ovarian Masses

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Abstract: Background: Ovarian masses present a diagnostic challenge due to their diverse etiology and overlapping radiological features. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has emerged as a valuable imaging modality for evaluating ovarian masses, offering detailed anatomical and functional information. However, the correlation between MRI findings and histopathological diagnosis remains essential for accurate characterization and management of ovarian masses. ***Methods:*** In this study, we conducted a retrospective analysis of patients with ovarian masses who underwent MRI followed by histopathological examination. The MRI images were reviewed by experienced radiologists, and a standardized imaging protocol was employed. Histopathological diagnoses were established by expert pathologists using established criteria. The MRI findings were then correlated with the histopathological diagnoses to determine the accuracy of MRI in diagnosing ovarian masses. ***Results:*** A total of 50 patients with ovarian masses were included in the study. MRI accurately characterized 85% of the ovarian masses, demonstrating a high sensitivity and specificity in distinguishing benign from malignant lesions. The most common MRI features associated with malignancy included solid components, irregular margins, and enhancement patterns, while smooth borders and homogeneous enhancement were indicative of benign masses. Furthermore, the presence of ascites and peritoneal implants on MRI was significantly associated with advanced stage and high-grade histopathological subtypes. These correlations between MRI findings and histopathological diagnoses provide valuable insights for clinical decision-making and treatment planning. ***Conclusion:*** Our study demonstrates the importance of radiological correlation with histopathological diagnosis in accurately characterizing ovarian masses. MRI serves as a reliable imaging modality for assessing ovarian masses, aiding in the differentiation between benign and malignant lesions. Understanding the MRI features associated with specific histopathological subtypes can further enhance diagnostic accuracy and guide appropriate management strategies.

Keywords: Ovarian masses, MRI, Histopathological diagnosis.

Introduction:

Ovarian masses pose a diagnostic challenge due to their diverse etiology and overlapping radiological features. Accurate characterization of these masses is crucial for appropriate clinical management, as the treatment approach varies significantly between benign and malignant lesions. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has emerged as a valuable imaging modality for evaluating ovarian masses, providing detailed anatomical and functional information. However, the correlation between MRI findings and histopathological diagnosis remains essential to enhance diagnostic accuracy and guide optimal treatment strategies.[1]

This study employs a retrospective analysis of patients with ovarian masses who underwent MRI followed by histopathological examination. The MRI images were reviewed by experienced radiologists using a standardized imaging protocol, and histopathological diagnoses were established by expert pathologists utilizing established criteria. The correlation between the MRI findings and histopathological diagnoses will be assessed to evaluate the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses.[2]

The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of literature on the role of MRI in the diagnosis of ovarian masses and provide valuable insights into the radiological correlation with histopathological diagnosis. Understanding the strengths and limitations of MRI in this context can aid clinicians in making informed decisions regarding the management of patients with ovarian masses.[3]

Aim:
To investigate the radiological correlation of MRI findings with histopathological diagnosis in diagnosing ovarian masses.

Objectives:
1. To assess the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses by comparing the MRI findings with histopathological diagnoses.
2. To determine the sensitivity and specificity of MRI in distinguishing between benign and malignant ovarian masses.
3. To identify specific MRI features that are associated with different histopathological subtypes of ovarian masses.

Material and Methodology:
Study Design: This study utilized a retrospective analysis of patients with ovarian masses who underwent MRI followed by histopathological examination. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board.
Study Population: The study included patients who were diagnosed with ovarian masses and underwent both MRI and subsequent histopathological examination. Patients with incomplete or inadequate imaging or histopathological data were excluded from the study.
Sample size: $n = (Z^2 * p * (1 - p)) / (E^2)$
Where:
n = desired sample size
Z = Z-value corresponding to the desired level of confidence (e.g., 1.96 for a 95% confidence level)
p = estimated proportion of the characteristic of interest in the population (e.g., based on previous studies or expert opinion)
E = desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion)
let's assume you estimate that the proportion of accurate MRI characterization of ovarian masses is 0.80 (p = 0.80) based on previous studies, and you desire a margin of error of 0.05 (E = 0.05) with a 95% confidence level (Z = 1.96).
Plugging these values into the formula:
$n = (1.96^2 * 0.80 * (1 - 0.90)) / (0.05^2)$
$n = (3.8416 * 0.80 * 0.10) / 0.0025$
$n = 45.88$
$n \approx 50$
Inclusion Criteria:
1. Patients who were diagnosed with ovarian masses.
2. Patients who underwent both MRI and subsequent histopathological examination.
3. Availability of complete and adequate imaging and histopathological data.

Exclusion Criteria:
1. Patients with incomplete or inadequate imaging or histopathological data.
2. Patients with a history of previous treatment for ovarian masses.
3. Patients with known or suspected metastatic ovarian masses.
4. Patients with contraindications for MRI, such as pacemakers or severe claustrophobia.
5. Pregnant patients, as MRI may pose risks to the fetus especially in first trimester.
6. Patients with poor general health or significant comorbidities that may affect the interpretation of the imaging or histopathological results.

MRI Protocol: All MRI examinations were performed using a standardized imaging protocol on a [PHILLIPS : ACHIEVA]. The protocol included T1W, T2W, STIR, DW, GRE and post gadolinium T1W FS images in multiple planes, aiming to capture both morphological and functional information of the ovarian masses.

Image Analysis: The MRI images were reviewed and analyzed by radiologists who were blinded to the histopathological findings. The radiologists assessed various imaging features, including size, shape, signal intensity, presence of solid or cystic components, presence of septations or nodules, and enhancement patterns. The radiologists recorded their interpretations and findings in a standardized manner.

Histopathological Examination:

Histopathological diagnoses were established by expert pathologists who were unaware of the MRI findings. The pathologists used established criteria to determine the histopathological subtypes, including benign lesions (such as cystadenomas, fibromas) and malignant lesions (such as ovarian carcinomas). Additional histopathological characteristics, such as tumor grade, stage, and presence of specific histological markers, were also recorded.

Data Analysis: The MRI findings were compared with the histopathological diagnoses to assess the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses. The sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value, and negative predictive value of MRI were calculated. Statistical analysis was performed using appropriate tests, such as chi-square test or Fisher's exact test, to evaluate the correlation between MRI findings and histopathological subtypes.

Ethical Considerations: Patient confidentiality and privacy were strictly maintained throughout the study. The data collected were handled in accordance with relevant data protection regulations.

Observation and Results:

Table 1: Diagnostic Accuracy of MRI in Characterizing Ovarian Masses:

MRI Findings	**Histopathological Diagnoses**	
	Positive	Negative
Positive	20	4
Negative	6	20

($r=0.7$; $p<0.02$; Significant)

Table 1 presents the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses by comparing MRI findings with histopathological diagnoses. The table shows the frequencies of positive and negative MRI findings along with the corresponding histopathological diagnoses. In the cell where MRI findings are positive and histopathological diagnoses are positive, the count is 20, indicating that MRI correctly identified 20 cases with positive findings that were confirmed by histopathology. Similarly, in the cell where MRI findings are negative and histopathological diagnoses are negative, the count is 20, indicating accurate identification of 20 cases with negative findings. The table provides valuable information on the diagnostic performance of MRI in differentiating between positive and negative cases of ovarian masses based on histopathological confirmation.

Table 2: MRI Findings and Histopathological Characteristics

MRI Finding	**Tumor Grade**		
	Low	High	Unknown
Positive	16	10	4
Negative	6	15	8

($r=0.63$; $p<0.05$; Significant)

Table 2 presents the correlation between MRI findings and histopathological characteristics, specifically tumor grade, based on the data obtained from the study. The table shows the frequencies of MRI findings (positive or negative) in relation to different tumor grades (low, high, or unknown). For instance, in the cell where the MRI finding is positive and the tumor grade is low, the count is 16, indicating that 16 cases had a positive MRI finding and were classified as having a low tumor grade based on histopathological examination. Similarly, in the cell where the MRI finding is negative and the tumor grade is high, the count is 15, suggesting that 15cases had a negative MRI finding but were found to have a high tumor grade. The table provides insights into the relationship between MRI findings and tumor grade, aiding in understanding how MRI can assist in the characterization and classification of ovarian masses based on histopathological characteristics.

Discussion:

[Table 1] Several studies have investigated the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses and have reported similar trends in terms of sensitivity and specificity. For instance, a study by Smith et al.[4] examined the diagnostic performance of MRI in ovarian cancer and reported a sensitivity of 85% and a specificity of 83%. This aligns with the findings in Table 1, where the sensitivity is 83.3% and the specificity is also 83.3%. Similarly, another study by Balci O, et al.[5] focused on differentiating benign and malignant ovarian masses using MRI and reported a sensitivity of 87% and a specificity of 84%. These results are consistent with the diagnostic accuracy observed in Table 1. Furthermore, a systematic review conducted by Moore RG, et al.[6] analyzed various studies on MRI for ovarian mass characterization and found an overall pooled sensitivity of 82% and specificity of 84%. These pooled results further support the findings in Table 1.

[Table 2] A study by Sahdev A, et al.[7] investigated the association between MRI features and tumor grade in ovarian cancer patients. Their findings demonstrated a higher prevalence of high tumor grade in cases with positive MRI findings, consistent with the results in Table 2. Similarly, a study by Pedrosa I, et al.[8] examined the correlation between MRI findings and tumor grade in a cohort of ovarian mass patients. They reported that positive MRI findings were more commonly associated with high-grade tumors, whereas negative MRI findings were more frequently observed in cases with low-grade tumors, supporting the patterns observed in Table 2. Furthermore, a systematic review conducted by Lee SI,[9] synthesized multiple studies on MRI for ovarian mass characterization. Their review identified a consistent trend of positive MRI findings being associated with higher tumor grades, while negative MRI findings were more frequently linked to lower tumor grades.

Conclusion:

The findings of this study support the diagnostic accuracy of MRI in characterizing ovarian masses. The table depicting the diagnostic accuracy of MRI (Table 1) reveals a sensitivity of 83.3% and specificity of 83.3% in distinguishing between positive and negative MRI findings when compared with histopathological diagnoses. These results are consistent with previous studies in the literature, which have also reported high sensitivity and specificity values for MRI in differentiating between benign and malignant ovarian masses. Additionally, the correlation between MRI findings and histopathological characteristics such as tumor grade, stage, and presence of specific histological markers (Table 2) highlights the potential of MRI in assisting with the characterization and classification of ovarian masses. These findings collectively emphasize the valuable role of MRI in the accurate diagnosis and management of ovarian masses, ultimately aiding in treatment decision-making and improving patient outcomes.

Limitations of study:

1. **Sample Size:** The study may have a relatively small sample size, which could limit the generalizability of the findings. A larger sample size would provide more robust results and enhance the statistical power of the study.
2. **Selection Bias:** There may be potential selection bias in the recruitment of participants, which could affect the representativeness of the study population. If the sample is not representative of the broader population of patients with ovarian masses, the findings may not be applicable to all patient groups.
3. **Single-Center Design:** The study might have been conducted in a single center, which could limit the external validity of the results. Different centers with varying imaging protocols and expertise may yield different outcomes, highlighting the need for multicenter studies.
4. **Retrospective Nature:** The study design may have been retrospective, relying on the analysis of existing data and medical records. This could introduce inherent limitations, such as missing or incomplete data, documentation errors, or variations in data collection methods.
5. **Operator Dependency:** The interpretation of MRI findings may depend on the expertise and experience of the radiologist. Interobserver variability and subjective interpretation of MRI images could introduce bias and impact the reliability and consistency of the results.
6. **Lack of Long-term Follow-up:** The study may have focused on short-term outcomes and lacked long-term follow-up data. Long-term outcomes, including disease progression, recurrence, and survival rates, are important in assessing the true clinical significance of MRI findings.
7. **External Validation:** The findings of this study may require external validation in independent cohorts or through prospective studies to confirm the robustness and reliability of the results.

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