

## Limbus Vertebra Demonstrated by Computed Tomography or Magnetic Resonance Image

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– Abstract –

**Study Design :** We studied retrospectively the limbus vertebra by computed tomography or magnetic resonance image.

**Objectives :** To analyze the clinical and radiologic characteristics of the limbus vertebra and to distinguish it from a fracture, infection or tumor.

**Summary of Literature Review :** The limbus vertebra is common. However, the clinical manifestations including the level, symptoms and radiologic characteristics of the limbus vertebra are not understood exactly in the literatures.

**Materials and Methods :** We presented 25 cases of the limbus vertebra that were confirmed by plain roentgenogram combined with computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Of the 25 patients, 18 were males and 7 females.

**Results :** The levels of the limbus vertebra were L3 (2 cases), L4 (13 cases), and L5 (8 cases). There were two cases of 2 level involvement (L3/4 and L4/5). All cases showed the lower lumbar lesion and complained of the lower back pain. The accompanying diseases included 10 cases of herniated intervertebral discs, 2 cases of ankylosing spondylitis, 2 cases of spinal stenosis and one spondylolisthesis. Three patients were first diagnosed as tuberculous spondylitis and 2 patient as spine fracture on plain roentgenograms. But they can be confirmed by demonstrating the herniation of disc material between the anterosuperior bony fragment and the rest of the body in CT or MRI.

**Conclusions :** The CT or MRI could be great diagnostic modalities. The pathogenesis is thought to be the herniation of disc material into the vertebral body such as Schmorl's node and disc degeneration. Most limbus vertebra was found at the lower lumbar region and accompanied with disc bulging and degeneration. The correlation between the limbus vertebra and lower back pain is not certain.

**Key Words :** Lumbar, Limbus vertebra, MRI, CT

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tion) (cartilaginous end plate) (herniation) (5,13) (2,3,9) (5) 25 (Table 4). MRI 17 grade II, 1 grade III, 3, grade IV, 8, grade V, 5 18 . Limbus angle 26° 40° 31.9° (Fig. 2). 1/3

1994 2000 25

14 (CT) 8 (MRI) (Siemens Somatom plus) (axial view) (Siemens Magnetom Vision 1.5T) T1, T2

가 limbus angle limbus angle 가 가

25 가 16 9 (Table 1). 25 8 63 20 80% 2, 3 (Table 2) 20% 가 3 2, 4 13, 5 8 (Fig. 1) 3 4 가 4 5 가 가 1 가 (Table 3).

6 2 가 4 가 가 10, 2, 2, 1 가 . 10 가 4, 가 3 가 1 (Table 4). MRI 17 grade II, 1, grade III, 3, grade IV, 8, grade V, 5 18 . Limbus angle 26° 40° 31.9° (Fig. 2). 1/3

(5,19) 가 가 persistent epiphysis<sup>17)</sup>, ossified vertebral rim<sup>14)</sup>, intercalary bone<sup>12)</sup>, posterior bony avulsion(PBA)<sup>11)</sup>, limbus fracture<sup>18)</sup>, end plate fracture<sup>3)</sup> . Hellstradius<sup>9)</sup>, Resnick Niwayama<sup>15)</sup> ring apophysis

**Table 1.** Age distribution

	M	F
5~10		1
11~20	3	1
21~30	7	
31~40	4	1
41~50	2	2
51~60		3
60~		1
Total	16 (64%)	9 (36%)

**Table 2.** Initial diagnosis by plain radiographic examination

Disease	No. of patients
Spinal Tuberculosis	2
Spine fracture	3
Limbus vertebra	20
Misdiagnosis rate	5/25 = 20%





**Fig. 2.** Lateral radiography of the lumbar spine. The length of detached bony fragment usually did not exceed 1/3 of endplate length and the angle between endplate and bony defect line was under 40 degrees.

Swischuk<sup>17)</sup> Henales<sup>10)</sup> (end plate fracture), (rim injury), (posterior limbus fracture)  
6,13,18)

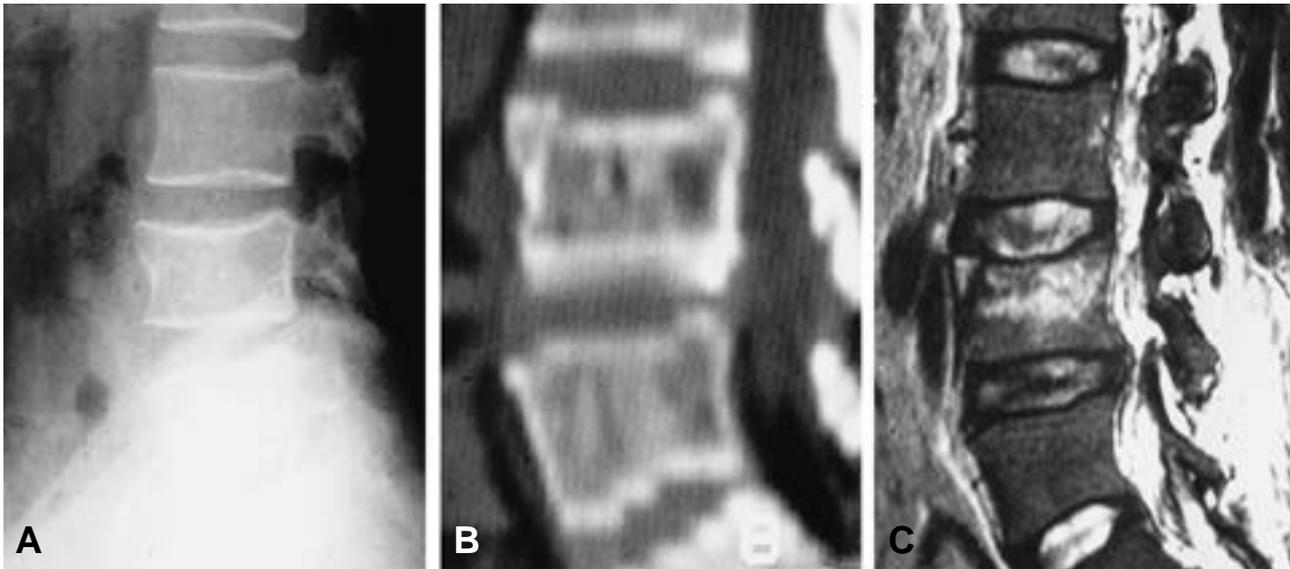
가 (Fig. 3), 25 가2, 가3 20% (compression, collapse)  
5)

가, 가 1/3  
 1/3  
 Schmorl's node  
 가 6,13,18)  
 ring apophysis  
 가 1/3  
 가  
 1/3 가  
 31.9 30  
 (Fig. 1A).

가 가 Yagan<sup>19)</sup>  
 Swischuk<sup>17)</sup> Goldman<sup>6)</sup> (18, 72%)가  
 (7, 28%)  
 Yagan<sup>19)</sup> 가  
 Scout view  
 가  
 Yagan (axial view) Scout view

(sagittal reformat view)  
 (Fig. 1B).

가 (Fig. 1C). 17 7 (41.2%) 가 (motion)



**Fig. 3-A.** This case was differential diagnosis. The bony defect at the anterosuperior margin of the L4 body implies the vertebral body fracture.

**B.** CT sagittal reformat view. Fracture line is well visible. No sclerosis and no disc material is in the fracture site.

**C.** Sagittal view of MRI. The findings of no herniation of disc material between this fragment and the vertebral body implies vertebral body fracture. In addition, bony contusion of vertebral body is another evidence of vertebral body fracture.

Swischuk<sup>17)</sup> 12 1 ,  
 1  
 1,8,17) 4  
 13 (52%), 5 8 (32%) 가  
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 10 20  
 , Schmorl's node 3-4 5 -  
 4,8) ,  
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 가

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 : 3 , 2  
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 : Schmorl's node  
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 :  
 : , , ,

1가 10

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