

Isolated Abnormal Elongated Epiphysis Of Distal Phalanx Of Bilateral Thumbs: A Rare Deformity

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INTRODUCTION:

Elongated epiphysis of thumb is a rare developmental malformation of secondary ossification. It is a variant of abnormal triangular epiphysis of thumb, a separate entity from delta phalanx of triphalangeal thumb¹. However, both may manifest as angular deformity.

REPORT:

A 14 month-old Malay girl presents with abnormal motion of bilateral thumbs since two weeks of life, which was initially treated as congenital trigger thumb. The mother was advised for physiotherapy, which resulted in no improvement. Otherwise, the child has normal developmental milestone with no other physical deformity. The mother claimed similar features found in the child's grandmother. Clinically, bilateral thumbs appeared larger and longer with no obvious angular deformity. Minimal creases seen over dorsum aspect of bilateral thumbs. The thumbs were not hypoplastic and no triggering or catching noted. Significant limitation of active and passive motion over interphalangeal joint observed.

Radiograph revealed abnormal elongated epiphysis of distal phalanx of bilateral thumbs with no angular deformity (Figure 1 and 2).



Figure 1



Figure 2

CONCLUSION:

Abnormal epiphysis of distal phalanx of thumb needs to be included in the differential for persistent abnormal motion of thumb in a child. Radiograph is advisable if no improvement following non-operative treatment to look for any bony abnormality.

Regular follow up with serial radiograph is mandatory as it may lead to subsequent functionally significant angular deformity. Surgical treatment is only advisable in a patient with angular deformity in visible abnormal ossification and it includes partial excision of epiphysis or intra-epiphyseal osteotomy¹⁻².

REFERENCES:

1. Baek, Goo Hyun, et al. *The Journal of hand surgery* 31.4 (2006): 544-548.
2. Baek, Goo Hyun. *BMC proceedings*. Vol. 9. No. 3. BioMed Central, 2015.