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RESEARCH AREA: HEALTH

TITLE: A 95-year-old patient with unexpected coronavirus disease 2019 masked by aspiration pneumonia: a case report

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Research activity description:

Background: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 infection has become a pandemic disease (coronavirus disease 2019). The infection has moved from China to the rest of the world and Italy represents one of the most affected countries. Older adults are more susceptible to develop complications with the consequent highest mortality rates.

Case presentation: We report a case of a 95-year-old Caucasian woman affected by pneumonia, initially defined as common aspiration pneumonia in a bedridden patient with vascular dementia, which later turned out to be coronavirus disease 2019 pneumonia during the initial spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 in our district. Some features of a computed tomography scan of her chest and her clinical history with known dysphagia had led at first to a different diagnosis with a consequent exposure of health professionals to infectious risk in two distinct hospitals. In this case report, we describe the clinical/imaging features of coronavirus disease 2019 pneumonia and the diagnostic process that led to a correct diagnosis in a nonagenarian with multiple comorbidities.

Conclusions: This case report highlights both the possible pitfalls in diagnosing coronavirus disease 2019 pneumonia in very old patients with comorbidities and the greater than expected spread of the infection, even in individuals with reduced interpersonal contacts and no defined epidemiological link.

Link: <https://jmedicalcasereports.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13256-020-02432-7>
