

Epidermoid Cyst

The least common cyst in bone is the epidermoid cyst. It is usually seen in the distal phalanx or in the skull. In the case of the distal phalanx, the lesion usually occurs as a result of a crushing trauma to the distal phalanx that drives nail bed epithelium down into subadjacent bone where it implants and produces an ectopic, squamous epithelial cystic lesion formed by a keratinized outer shell. It is filled with clear fluid and creates a surface erosion of the adjacent distal tuft of the phalanx that shows a very characteristic radiographic appearance. The lesions will transluminate with a flashlight. Other lesions that have a similar radiographic appearance include enchondromas, glomus tumors of the distal phalanx and perhaps a neurofibroma. Treatment consists of a simple curettement and packing of the defect with autogenous bone graft.