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Image in rheumatology

## Costovertebral arthritis revealing spondyloarthritis

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This short tau inversion restauration (STIR) MRI sequence axial slice of the 10th thoracic vertebra (Fig. 1) shows hyperintense signal surrounding hyposignal of both edges of the left costover-

tebral joint. This 40 years old woman suffered from thoracic spine pain since two years with normal x-rays and partial NSAIDs efficacy. HLA-B27 typing was negative, but pelvic MRI revealed



Fig. 1.

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evidence of typical bilateral sacro-iliitis, leading to the diagnosis of non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis. Dramatic improvement occurred under anti-TNF treatment. Systematic imaging evaluation demonstrate the high frequency of inflammatory involvement of the posterior elements in thoracic spine in axial spondyloarthritis [1].

## Reference

- [1] Maksymowych WP, Crowther SM, Dhillon SS, et al. Systematic assessment of inflammation by magnetic resonance imaging in the posterior elements of the spine in ankylosing spondylitis. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken)* 2010;62: 4–10.