

Avascular Necrosis



Early avascular necrosis in the hip can easily be overlooked or misinterpreted as osteoarthritis. In the early stage there will be cystic lucency(s) in the femoral head extending to the articular surface. This radiolucent area is often surrounded by an area of hazy sclerosis. If subchondral fracture is present, a change in the contour of the articular cortex will be seen. The lack of joint and acetabular involvement helps to differentiate from OA. When suspected, MR is indicated and if confirmed a referral to an orthopedic surgeon is in order.