Correct assessment of unusual hiatus hernia with magnetic resonance imaging

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A 54-year old woman presented with a year long history of increasing dyspnoea and orthopnoea. The chest X-ray and CT scan suggested bilateral hemidiaphragmatic elevation (Fig. 1a and b). Subsequent MRI demonstrated normal position of both hemi-diaphragms and diagnosis of massive hiatus hernia was made (Fig. 2). Herniated stomach, omentum and colon were confirmed intraoperatively.

Figure 1: Chest X-ray suggested bilateral hemidiaphragmatic elevation (black arrows) due to suspected diaphragmatic palsy or eventration (a). Coronal CT scan findings were equivocal (b).

Figure 2: Magnetic resonance imaging clearly demonstrated normal position of both hemi-diaphragms (white arrows) and correct diagnosis of a massive hiatus hernia was made.