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A Simple Method for Spinal Localization in MR Imaging

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MR imaging has become a powerful tool in the study of the spinal canal and its contents. In spite of the many advantages of this imaging technique over previous methods, the problem of spinal localization remains when imaging the upper, mid, and lower thoracic spine. Identification of the correct anatomic level in these regions holds obvious implications for planning therapy [1]. By using gelatin cod liver oil capsules as a surface marker, the problem of spinal localization can be easily overcome. The second cervical vertebra and the L5–S1 junction are used as anatomic reference points on preliminary scout films, which include the surface marker. Sagittal T1-weighted scout images with a large field of view are obtained to cover the area of interest as well as to serve as a reference point, such as the C2 or the L5–S1 level (Figs. 1 and 2). The surface marker, which is visualized as a prominent bright spot, can then be correlated with a particular vertebral body to allow accurate localization when imaging the rest of the thoracic spine. This technique is simple and safe for overcoming the problem of spinal localization.

REFERENCE