A 70-year-old man, diagnosed to have adenocarcinoma of the left lung, was evaluated for further staging with PET/CT scan. The scan showed a metabolically active soft tissue lesion in the middle lobe of the left lung and hypermetabolic lytic lesions in the right iliac bone, consistent with a diagnosis of metastatic skeletal lesions. In addition, the right lobe of the thyroid showed a small nodular swelling with active metabolism (Fig. 1), which on ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration cytology was a poorly differentiated carcinoma of the thyroid. The patient was not operated for the thyroid incidentaloma as he was not willing to have any surgical procedure. The lung lesion on immunohistochemistry was found to be positive for epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) and the patient was started on geftinib.

After 6 months of treatment with geftinib, a follow-up PET/CT scan showed reduction in the size and metabolism in the lung and skeletal lesions, suggesting a favourable response. Interestingly, the poorly differentiated carcinoma in the thyroid disappeared with no active metabolism seen (Fig. 2).

Poorly differentiated carcinomas of the thyroid are refractory to common anticancer therapies, and novel targeted agents are being tested in these aggressive malignancies. The above images show the promising antitumour activity of geftinib monotherapy against adenocarcinoma of the lung as well as poorly differentiated carcinoma of the thyroid.

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