Reviewer's report

Title: Esophageal and Small Bowel Obstruction by Occupational Bezoar: Report of a Case

Authors:

Michail Pitiakoudis (mpitiak@med.duth.gr)
Dr Alexandra K Tsaroucha (tsihrin@otenet.gr)
Konstantinos Mimidis (mpitiak@med.duth.gr)
Theodoros Constantinidis (tconstan@med.duth.gr)
Stavros Anagnostoulis (atsarouc@med.duth.gr)
George Stathopoulos (stathg@otenet.gr)
Constandinos Simopoulos (simop@med.duth.gr)

Version: 1 Date: 27 Feb 2003

Reviewer: Basil J J Ammori

Level of interest: A paper of limited interest

Advice on publication: Accept after discretionary revisions

Interesting case report!

MAJOR COMMENT:
The authors suggested in their concluding paragraph the avoidance of 'certain kinds of fibre'. Which kinds of fibre? Please specify.

MINOR COMMENTS:
The following alterations are suggested to improve the English and readability of the article:

- ABSTRACT:
  - Background-Last sentence: Intestinal obstruction .... "has" (instead of 'have') not been reported.
  - Case Presentation-Third sentence: 'He had undergone a vagotomy and pyloroplasty 10 years earlier.'

- CASE PRESENTATION:
  - First sentence: ..... complained "of" (instead of 'about')
  - First paragraph-Last sentence: ..... 'vagotomy and pyloroplasty'. (instead of 'pyloroplasty and vagotomy')
  - Second paragraph-Third sentence: Vomiting continued and 'the' dysphagia 'worsened'.
  - Second paragraph-join and shorthen the 4th & 5th sentences: The patient then underwent 'an' upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, 'which' showed ..... (Fig 1).
  - Third paragraph- 1st sentence: delete 'so he was kept in the hospital for further examination'.
  - Third paragraph-2nd sentence: 'developed' instead of 'felt', 'repeat X-ray' instead of 'new X-ray'.
  - The remainder of the 3rd paragraph may read better as follows: 'He was then transefrred to the surgical team, where failure of a few days of conservative treatment necessitated an exploratory laparotomy. The laparotomy revealed a complete distal ileal obstruction secondary to a solid intraluminal foreign body (dimensions ....), which was removed through an enterotomy (Figs. 3 and 4). Pathological examination of the foreign body revealed a composition similar to that removed from the oesophagus (Fig. 2b). The patient was discharged on the 8th postoperative day, and has remained well at 18 months follow up.'

- DISCUSSION:
  - 1st paragraph-Line 6: 'into' the bowel, rather than 'in' the bowel.
  - The remainder of the 1st paragraph may better read as follows: Obstruction from phytobezoars usually occurs in the ileum or jejunum, and it is unusual for reverse migration of the bezoar to the
oesophagus to occur and result in obstruction as occurred in our patient [5,6]. Some of the pathogenic mechanisms responsible for bezoar formation in patients with previous vagotomy and pyloroplasty include decreased secretion of hydrochloric acid, decreased gastric motility (atonic stomach), and occupational exposure [1,2,4].

- 2nd paragraph- 1st & 2nd sentences might read better as follows: 'Whilst bezoars located in the esophagus or stomach should be treated conservatively in the first instance [3], those causing acute intestinal obstruction clearly require surgical intervention [1,3,4].'
- Page 6, line 21: while the rest "migrated" from the stomach ...
- Page 6, Line 22: replace 'moved to the' with 'and into' ...
- Page 7-Line 3: Delete the first sentence of the paragraph 'This is a rare case ...', as this has been stated earlier in the Discussion.
- Page 7, Line 8: 'workers' instead of 'worker'.
- Page 7, Line 11: replace 'also' with 'are advised to'.

**Competing interests:**

None declared.