



A Unique Case Of Disseminated Histoplasmosis Presenting As Colonic Ulcers



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Introduction

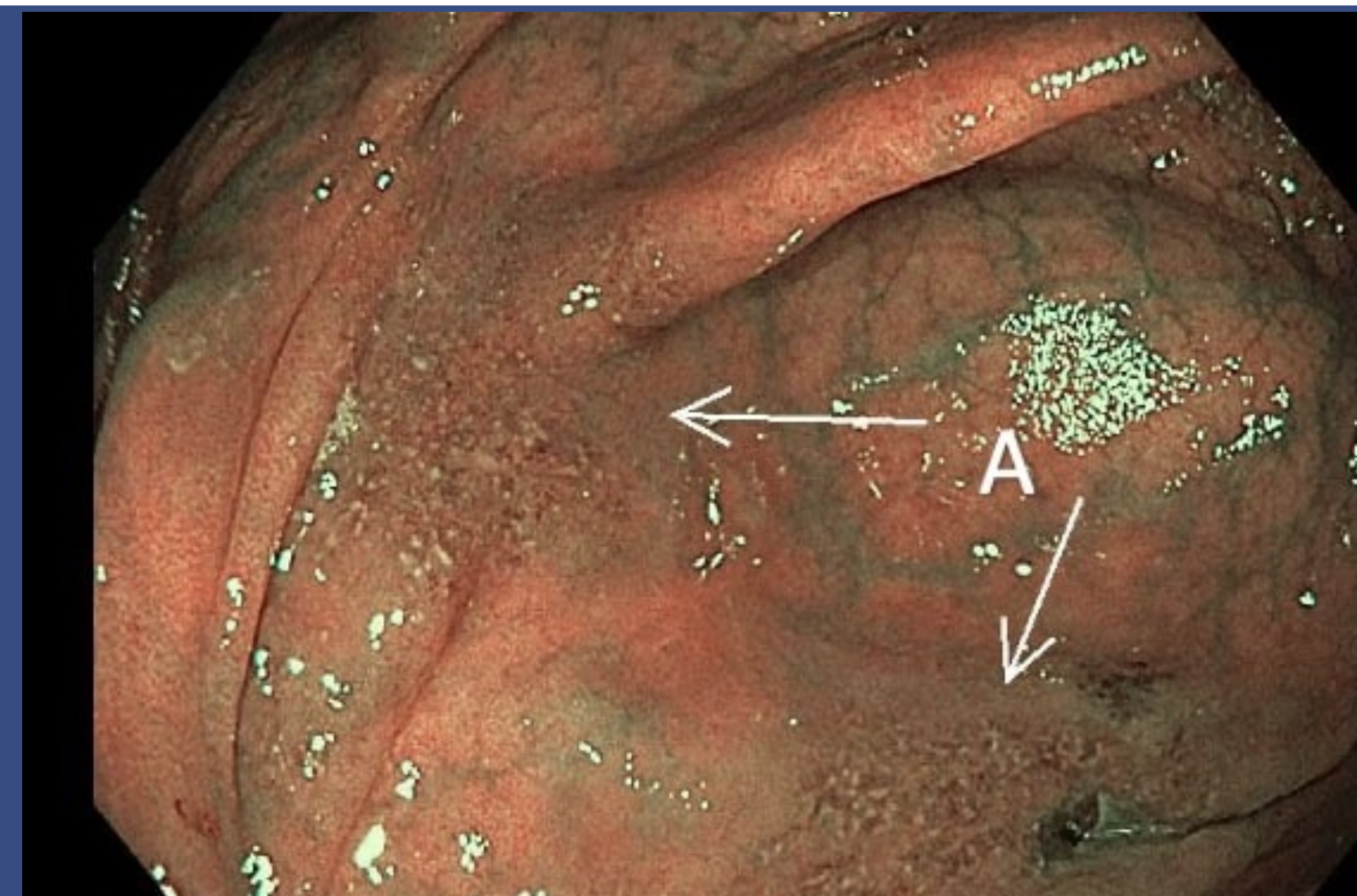
- Histoplasmosis is the most common endemic mycosis in the United States.
- The disseminated form is usually only seen in immunocompromised patients.
- Localized infections are usually self-limiting and often asymptomatic.
- Some patients present with extra-pulmonary disseminated disease with gastrointestinal manifestations being uncommon.
- Here we report isolated colonic involvement of disseminated histoplasmosis in an asymptomatic patient.

Case

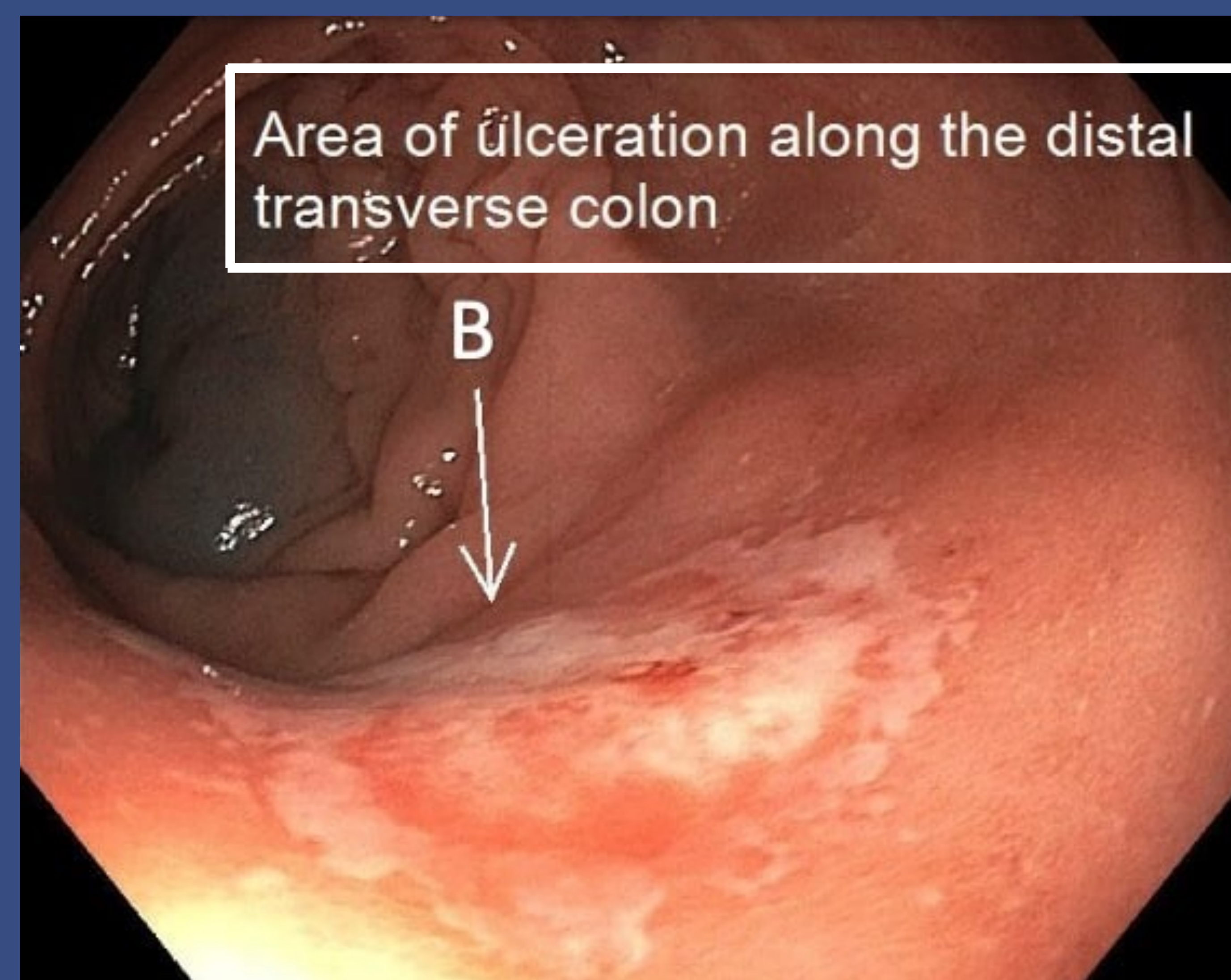
- A 62 year old male with a history of end stage renal disease secondary to IgA nephropathy on chronic immunosuppressive therapy presented for a routine screening colonoscopy.
- The patient denied any gastrointestinal and pulmonary symptoms.
- He grew up in the state of Mississippi and was residing in Texas working in landscaping.

Outcomes

- Within the cecum, there were two discrete areas of abnormal appearing tissue [image A].
- A 10mm irregular, superficial ulcer with no high-risk stigmata for bleeding was also noted within the distal transverse colon [image B].



Discrete areas of anomalous tissue in the cecum



Area of ulceration along the distal transverse colon

Outcomes Continued

- Cold forceps biopsies were obtained at both sites.
- Surgical pathology with Grocott's methenamine silver stain demonstrated abundant intra-histiocytic and extracellular organisms, morphologically compatible with histoplasmosis.
- The patient was serologically tested for histoplasmosis, coccidioides, and blastomyces.
- PCR from the tissue sample taken during the biopsy tested positive for *Histoplasma capsulatum*.
- The patient was started on itraconazole for 12 months duration.
- He tolerated therapy without side effects and remained asymptomatic on follow up.

Conclusions

- This case demonstrates an unusual presentation of disseminated histoplasmosis and shows asymptomatic colonic involvement including the variable endoscopic appearance of this fungal infection.
- With a mortality rate as high as 31% in the immunocompromised population, gastroenterologists need to remain cognizant when encountering colonic ulcerations or abnormal mucosa in high risk patients.
- This case highlights the importance of tissue sampling to secure the diagnosis along with the efficacy of itraconazole in treating this potentially deadly infection.

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