

A Rare Case of Symptomatic Colonic Lymphangioma

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Background

- Lymphangiomas are benign lymphatic lesions, most frequently identified in the head and neck.
- Colonic lymphangiomas are rare and represent less than 1% of all lymphatic malformations.
- These lesions are often asymptomatic and discovered incidentally during routine colonoscopy.
- We present a case of a symptomatic colonic lymphangioma manifesting as a large mass requiring surgical resection.

Case

- A 42-year-old male presented with lower abdominal pain associated with nausea. At presentation, vital signs were stable, and the abdominal exam was benign. He denied any family history of gastrointestinal malignancies.
- Contrast-enhanced CT abdomen/pelvis revealed a 6.6 x 7 x 6.6 cm colonic mass near the hepatic flexure.
- Colonoscopy demonstrated a large, subepithelial-appearing mass in the ascending colon protruding more than 90% into the lumen. Retroflexed view revealed 2 x 2 cm ulceration on the proximal aspect of the lesion.
- Biopsies of the mass demonstrated superficial portions of colonic mucosa with mild focal inflammation.
- CEA, CA 19-9, and CA 125 were all within normal limits and additional CT imaging found no metastatic lesions.
- Surgical evaluation was advised given the size of the mass and the patient thus underwent an elective laparoscopic right hemicolectomy.
- Tissue samples revealed lymphangiomatosis/cystic lymphatic malformation centered in the colonic submucosa with extension into the subserosal tissue. No cellular atypia or malignancy was identified, and 24 lymph nodes were benign.

Figures

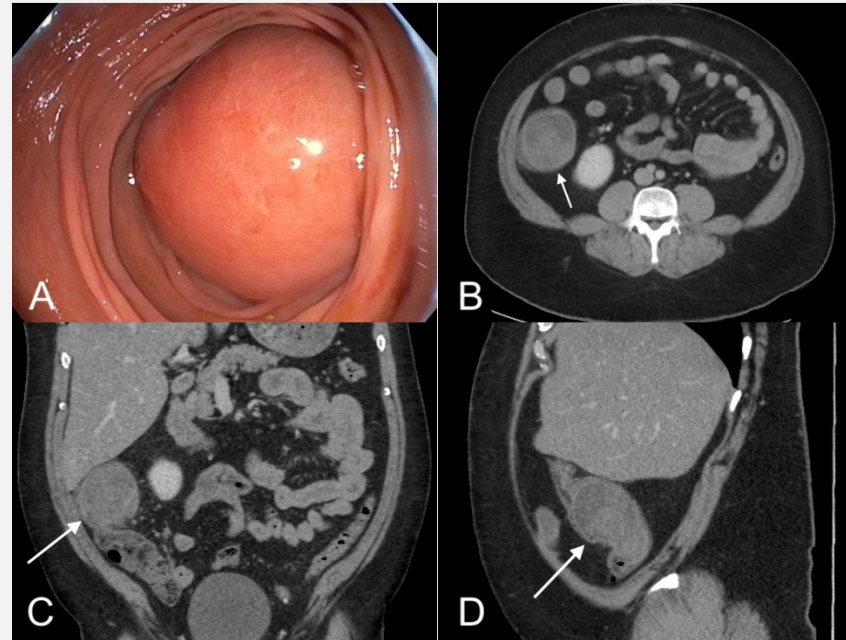


Figure A. Colonoscopy. Submucosal mass seen in the ascending colon involving more than 90% of the circumference.
Figures B/C/D. CT abdomen/pelvis. Axial/coronal/sagittal images of the mass in the ascending colon/hepatic flexure.

Discussion

- Lymphangiomas have an incidence of less than 0.20% and intra-abdominal lymphangiomas represent only a fraction of cases.
- Although most colonic lymphangiomas are asymptomatic and identified incidentally, they can lead to an array of symptoms and severe complications such as obstruction, intussusception, and perforation can occur, and large lesions may require surgical intervention.
- Although colonic lymphangiomas are rare, it is important to be aware of their rising incidence to help facilitate accurate and timely diagnosis to prevent complications.

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