

Title:

Enteroscopic diagnosis of intestinal malabsorption of a rare etiology: diaphragm disease

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Enteroscopic diagnosis of intestinal malabsorption of a rare etiology: diaphragm disease

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Case report

A 59-year-old male patient presented with malabsorption syndrome, which started with polyneuropathy. Upper endoscopy, colonoscopy and abdominal magnetic resonance imaging were normal. Capsule endoscopy showed isolated small bowel diverticula and incipient ulcerated mucosal rings in the jejunum. Upper single balloon enteroscopy confirmed villous denudation and isolated diverticula (Figs. 1-3). Biopsies displayed segmental hyperplasia of the muscularis mucosa, with nodules similar to neuromuscular hamartomas and overlying lymphoplasmocytic enteritis. These findings suggested diaphragm disease of the small bowel.

Discussion

Diaphragm disease is a rare disease characterized by the presence of multiple thin diaphragms, such as septa, which narrow the intestinal lumen (1). These rings differ from the membranes by their greater thickness. The clinical features can be iron deficiency anemia, intestinal obstruction, a change in bowel habits or acute abdomen secondary to perforation (1,2). It is usually associated with a sustained use of high doses of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (1-3), but this patient denied any use of these drugs.

The diagnosis is sometimes difficult due to the fact that the usual imaging tests do not detect the alterations produced by this disease (1,3). It usually requires the use of a capsule endoscopy or enteroscopy with biopsies (1,3). The differential diagnosis is broad, such as infections, lymphoma and systemic diseases, among others. The conservative treatment consists in the removal of selected non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Surgery should be considered in the case of a perforation or obstruction. Therapeutic enteroscopy is an alternative in the case of obstruction (2).

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Fig. 1. Enteroscopy image which shows villous denudation in the jejunum.

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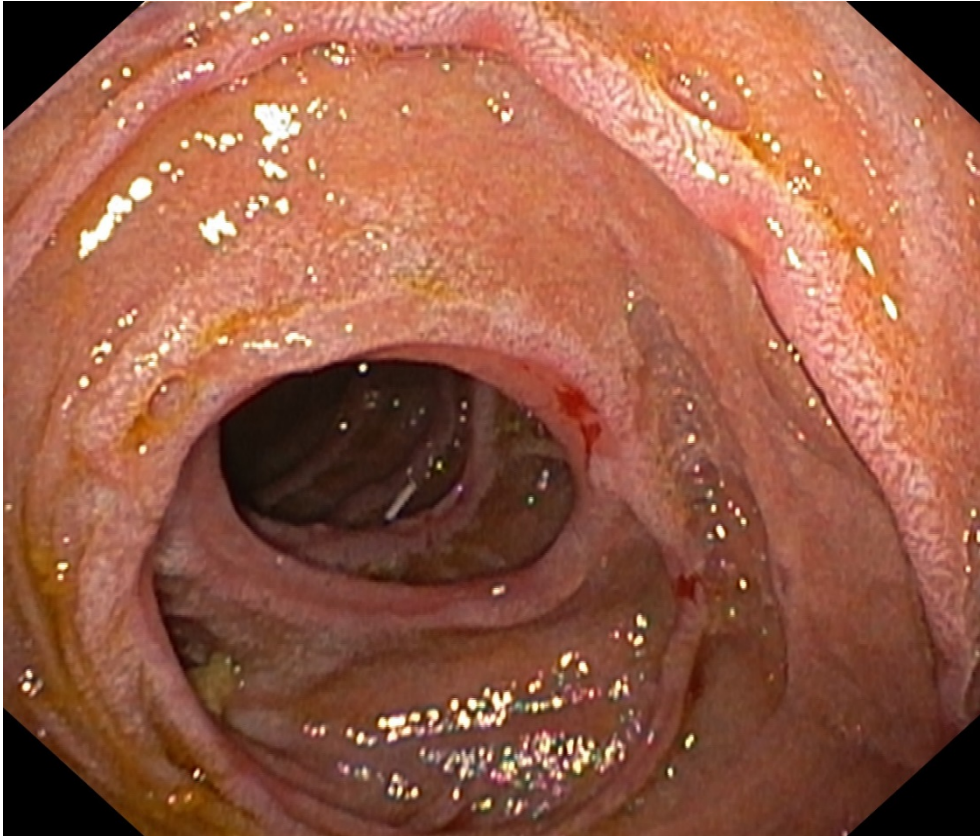


Fig. 2. Enteroscopy image which shows incipient rings in the jejunum that decrease the intestinal lumen but do not produce intestinal obstruction.

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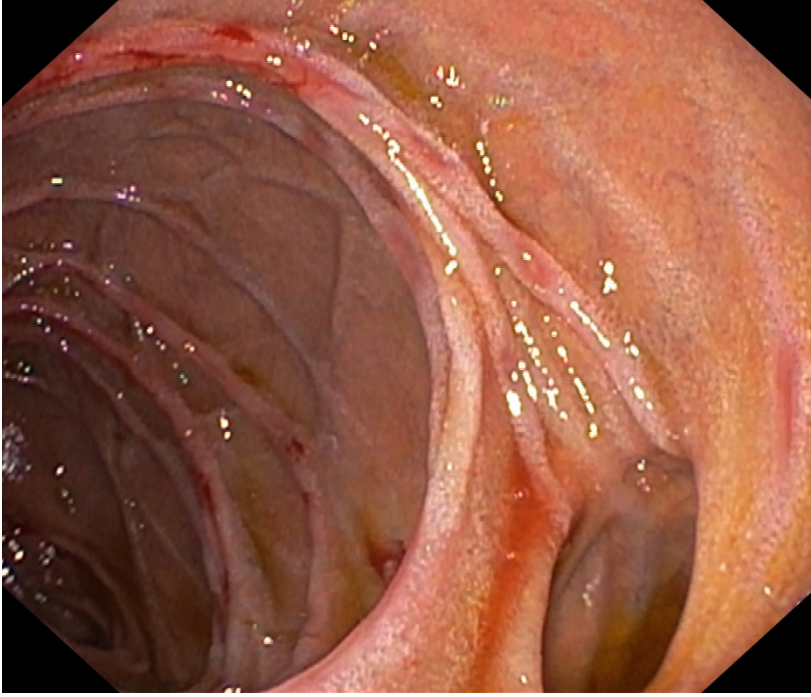


Fig. 3. Enteroscopy image which shows rings and a diverticulum in the jejunum.

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