

Pancreatic Lymphatic Malformation: An Unusual Cause of Abdominal Pain

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Lymphatic malformations are benign, congenital, vascular lesions that most commonly occur in the neck and axilla. Abdominal lymphatic malformations are rare and reportedly account for around 5% of all lymphatic malformations; the pancreatic subtype is even more rare, occurring in 0.9% of abdominal lymphatic malformations.¹ Categories of vascular malformations include capillary malformations, venous malformations, lymphatic malformations, arterial malformations, arteriovenous malformations, or combined complex types. Although the majority of pancreatic vascular malformations are arteriovenous², only around 200 cases of pancreatic arteriovenous malformations have been reported.³ We report a case of a successfully treated pancreatic capillary lymphatic malformation.

Our patient is a 28-year-old female who presented with lower abdominal pain and bloating. Computed tomography (CT) was obtained, which showed a large multi-loculated complex fluid collection in the left abdomen arising adjacent to the stomach and descending into the lesser sac. The mass measured 12.3 × 12.4 × 21 cm. The patient had undergone a sleeve gastrectomy the previous year and stated that at the time of her bariatric surgery a cyst was noticed in the distal portion of her pancreas. Given the rapid growth of the cyst, the decision was made to explore the patient in the operating room. Intraoperative findings were significant for a large, cystic mass arising from the pancreas without vascular involvement but adherent to a portion of the descending colon and splenic hilum; an additional mass was noted to be arising from the left lobe of the liver. A distal pancreatectomy with splenectomy, colon resection with primary re-anastomosis, and liver wedge resection were performed.

Pathology results revealed benign pancreatic tissue and cystically dilated lymphatic spaces associated with inflammation, fibrosis, and thick-walled blood vessels compatible with an intra-abdominal lymphatic malformation. The patient had a relatively uneventful postoperative course and was seen for routine follow-up at which time she was doing remarkably well.

Vascular malformations can be classified as simple or combined.¹ Simple vascular malformations can be further classified as capillary malformation, lymphatic malformation, venous malformation, and arteriovenous malformation. The combined malformation is the combination of two or more simple malformations. In our report, we describe a simple lymphatic malformation that stained positive for D2-40 as well as CD34.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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