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Contents

Thrice Monthly Volume 10 Number 22 August 6, 2022

OPINION REVIEW

- 7620 Whipple's operation with a modified centralization concept: A model in low-volume Caribbean centers
Cawich SO, Pearce NW, Naraynsingh V, Shukla P, Deshpande RR

REVIEW

- 7631 Role of micronutrients in Alzheimer's disease: Review of available evidence
Fei HX, Qian CF, Wu XM, Wei YH, Huang JY, Wei LH

MINIREVIEWS

- 7642 Application of imaging techniques in pancreaticobiliary maljunction
Wang JY, Mu PY, Xu YK, Bai YY, Shen DH
- 7653 Update on gut microbiota in gastrointestinal diseases
Nishida A, Nishino K, Ohno M, Sakai K, Owaki Y, Noda Y, Imaeda H
- 7665 Vascular complications of pancreatitis
Kalas MA, Leon M, Chavez LO, Canalizo E, Surani S

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Clinical and Translational Research

- 7674 Network pharmacology and molecular docking reveal zedoary turmeric-trisomes in Inflammatory bowel disease with intestinal fibrosis
Zheng L, Ji YY, Dai YC, Wen XL, Wu SC

Case Control Study

- 7686 Comprehensive proteomic signature and identification of CDKN2A as a promising prognostic biomarker and therapeutic target of colorectal cancer
Wang QQ, Zhou YC, Zhou Ge YJ, Qin G, Yin TF, Zhao DY, Tan C, Yao SK

Retrospective Cohort Study

- 7698 Is anoplasty superior to scar revision surgery for post-hemorrhoidectomy anal stenosis? Six years of experience
Weng YT, Chu KJ, Lin KH, Chang CK, Kang JC, Chen CY, Hu JM, Pu TW

Retrospective Study

- 7708 Short- (30-90 days) and mid-term (1-3 years) outcomes and prognostic factors of patients with esophageal cancer undergoing surgical treatments
Shi MK, Mei YQ, Shi JL

- 7720 Effectiveness of pulsed radiofrequency on the medial cervical branches for cervical facet joint pain
Chang MC, Yang S
- 7728 Clinical performance evaluation of O-Ring Halcyon Linac: A real-world study
Wang GY, Zhu QZ, Zhu HL, Jiang LJ, Zhao N, Liu ZK, Zhang FQ
- 7738 Correlation between the warning symptoms and prognosis of cardiac arrest
Zheng K, Bai Y, Zhai QR, Du LF, Ge HX, Wang GX, Ma QB
- 7749 Serum ferritin levels in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and tic disorder
Tang CY, Wen F
- 7760 Application of metagenomic next-generation sequencing in the diagnosis of infectious diseases of the central nervous system after empirical treatment
Chen YY, Guo Y, Xue XH, Pang F
- 7772 Prognostic role of multiple abnormal genes in non-small-cell lung cancer
Yan LD, Yang L, Li N, Wang M, Zhang YH, Zhou W, Yu ZQ, Peng XC, Cai J
- 7785 Prospective single-center feasible study of innovative autorelease bile duct supporter to delay adverse events after endoscopic papillectomy
Liu SZ, Chai NL, Li HK, Feng XX, Zhai YQ, Wang NJ, Gao Y, Gao F, Wang SS, Linghu EQ

Clinical Trials Study

- 7794 Performance of Dexcom G5 and FreeStyle Libre sensors tested simultaneously in people with type 1 or 2 diabetes and advanced chronic kidney disease
Ólafsdóttir AF, Andelin M, Saeed A, Sofizadeh S, Hamoodi H, Jansson PA, Lind M

Observational Study

- 7808 Complications of chronic pancreatitis prior to and following surgical treatment: A proposal for classification
Murruste M, Kirsimägi Ü, Kase K, Veršinina T, Talving P, Lepner U
- 7825 Effects of comprehensive nursing on postoperative complications, mental status and quality of life in patients with glioma
Dong H, Zhang XL, Deng CX, Luo B

Prospective Study

- 7832 Predictors of long-term anxiety and depression in discharged COVID-19 patients: A follow-up study
Boyraz RK, Şahan E, Boylu ME, Kırpınar İ

META-ANALYSIS

- 7844 Same-day single-dose vs large-volume split-dose regimens of polyethylene glycol for bowel preparation: A systematic review and meta-analysis
Pan H, Zheng XL, Fang CY, Liu LZ, Chen JS, Wang C, Chen YD, Huang JM, Zhou YS, He LP

- 7859** Rectal nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, glyceryl trinitrate, or combinations for prophylaxis of post-endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography pancreatitis: A network meta-analysis

Shi QQ, Huang GX, Li W, Yang JR, Ning XY

- 7872** Effect of celecoxib on improving depression: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Wang Z, Wu Q, Wang Q

CASE REPORT

- 7883** Rectal mature teratoma: A case report

Liu JL, Sun PL

- 7890** Antibiotic and glucocorticoid-induced recapitulated hematological remission in acute myeloid leukemia: A case report and review of literature

Sun XY, Yang XD, Yang XQ, Ju B, Xiu NN, Xu J, Zhao XC

- 7899** Non-secretory multiple myeloma expressed as multiple extramedullary plasmacytoma with an endobronchial lesion mimicking metastatic cancer: A case report

Lee SB, Park CY, Lee HJ, Hong R, Kim WS, Park SG

- 7906** Latamoxef-induced severe thrombocytopenia during the treatment of pulmonary infection: A case report

Zhang RY, Zhang JJ, Li JM, Xu YY, Xu YH, Cai XJ

- 7913** Multicentric reticulohistiocytosis with prominent skin lesions and arthritis: A case report

Xu XL, Liang XH, Liu J, Deng X, Zhang L, Wang ZG

- 7924** Brainstem abscesses caused by *Listeria monocytogenes*: A case report

Wang J, Li YC, Yang KY, Wang J, Dong Z

- 7931** Primary hypertension in a postoperative paraganglioma patient: A case report

Wei JH, Yan HL

- 7936** Long-term survival of gastric mixed neuroendocrine-non-neuroendocrine neoplasm: Two case reports

Woo LT, Ding YF, Mao CY, Qian J, Zhang XM, Xu N

- 7944** Percutaneous transforaminal endoscopic decompression combined with percutaneous vertebroplasty in treatment of lumbar vertebral body metastases: A case report

Ran Q, Li T, Kuang ZP, Guo XH

- 7950** Atypical imaging features of the primary spinal cord glioblastoma: A case report

Liang XY, Chen YP, Li Q, Zhou ZW

- 7960** Resection with limb salvage in an Asian male adolescent with Ewing's sarcoma: A case report

Lai CY, Chen KJ, Ho TY, Li LY, Kuo CC, Chen HT, Fong YC

- 7968** Early detection of circulating tumor DNA and successful treatment with osimertinib in thr790met-positive leptomeningeal metastatic lung cancer: A case report

Xu LQ, Wang YJ, Shen SL, Wu Y, Duan HZ

- 7973** Delayed arterial symptomatic epidural hematoma on the 14th day after posterior lumbar interbody fusion: A case report
Hao SS, Gao ZF, Li HK, Liu S, Dong SL, Chen HL, Zhang ZF
- 7982** Clinical and genetic analysis of nonketotic hyperglycinemia: A case report
Ning JJ, Li F, Li SQ
- 7989** Ectopic Cushing's syndrome in a patient with metastatic Merkel cell carcinoma: A case report
Ishay A, Touma E, Vornicova O, Dodiuk-Gad R, Goldman T, Bisharat N
- 7994** Occurrence of MYD88L265P and CD79B mutations in diffuse large b cell lymphoma with bone marrow infiltration: A case report
Huang WY, Weng ZY
- 8003** Rare case of compartment syndrome provoked by inhalation of polyurethane agent: A case report
Choi JH, Oh HM, Hwang JH, Kim KS, Lee SY
- 8009** Acute ischemic Stroke combined with Stanford type A aortic dissection: A case report and literature review
He ZY, Yao LP, Wang XK, Chen NY, Zhao JJ, Zhou Q, Yang XF
- 8018** Compound-honeysuckle-induced drug eruption with special manifestations: A case report
Zhou LF, Lu R
- 8025** Spontaneous internal carotid artery pseudoaneurysm complicated with ischemic stroke in a young man: A case report and review of literature
Zhong YL, Feng JP, Luo H, Gong XH, Wei ZH
- 8034** Microcystic adnexal carcinoma misdiagnosed as a "recurrent epidermal cyst": A case report
Yang SX, Mou Y, Wang S, Hu X, Li FQ
- 8040** Accidental discovery of appendiceal carcinoma during gynecological surgery: A case report
Wang L, Dong Y, Chen YH, Wang YN, Sun L
- 8045** Intra-ampullary papillary-tubular neoplasm combined with ampullary neuroendocrine carcinoma: A case report
Zavrtanik H, Luzar B, Tomažič A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

- 8054** Commentary on "Primary orbital monophasic synovial sarcoma with calcification: A case report"
Tokur O, Aydin S, Karavas E

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Rectal mature teratoma: A case report

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Abstract

BACKGROUND

Rectal mature teratoma is rare and has been reported as a case report in this study. Herein, clinical presentation, magnetic resonance imaging findings, and immunohistochemistry showed a pelvic rectal mature teratoma. The case report and the surgical treatment procedure have been discussed below.

CASE SUMMARY

A 29-year-old Chinese female showed up with over a 1-mo history of perianal mass that emerged after defecation. Physical examination indicated that the mass was 4 cm × 3 cm × 3 cm. The intraoperative procedure involved ligation of the sigmoid colon 10 cm above the upper edge of the tumor, followed by ligation of the rectum 3.5 cm above the upper edge of the tumor, and subsequent complete removal of the mass. The histopathology confirmed the mature teratoma.

CONCLUSION

The tumor can be completely removed using surgery to prevent its recurrence.

Key Words: Rectal; Mature teratoma; Therapy; Case report

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Core Tip: Herein, a rectal mature teratoma patient was reported. However, only a few similar cases have been reported. Currently, it is difficult to diagnose mature rectal teratoma using a computed tomography scan. However, complete removal of the tumor using surgery can prevent its recurrence.

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INTRODUCTION

Teratoma is a tumor caused by pluripotent cells, especially the embryonic stem or seed cells in the gonad or embryonic part of the body. It occurs in the midline or on both sides of the body. It often originates from the Hensen's node, the location of pluripotent stem cells. Teratoma also occurs in the sacral region where pluripotent cells are located[1]. Teratoma is mostly benign with low malignant potential, but it can also develop into a malignancy[2]. Rectal teratoma is rare, and there are few reports worldwide. Mature teratoma is a benign tumor (dermoid cyst) and accounts for over 95% of teratomas. Mature teratoma mostly occurs in women of childbearing age and sometimes in young girls and postmenopausal women. It rarely occurs in males[3]. This study aimed to review the diagnosis and treatment of rectal teratoma and to determine the clinical characteristics associated with this rare tumor.

CASE PRESENTATION

Chief complaints

A 29-year-old female, G1P0, with over a 1-mo history of a perianal mass that emerged after defecation, was hospitalized in the First Affiliated Hospital of Guangxi Chinese Medicine University.

History of present illness

She reported a 1-mo medical history of perianal mass that emerged after defecation and complained about the anal bulge. The patient had not used contraceptives, was not injured, had no pain, chills, or fever, and no difficulty during defecation.

History of past illness

The patient had no past illness.

Personal and family history

The patient had a history of artificial abortion and no family history of rectal mature teratoma. The condition was diagnosed as a rectal mass (nature to be investigated).

Physical examination

The mass was 4 cm × 3 cm × 3 cm inside the anus with a dentate line distance of about 6 cm and was smooth upon palpation. A non-tender mass was seen outside the anus.

Laboratory examinations

Hematological examinations, including serum electrolyte levels, human chorionic gonadotropin, comprehensive metabolic panel, and complete blood count, were normal.

Imaging examinations

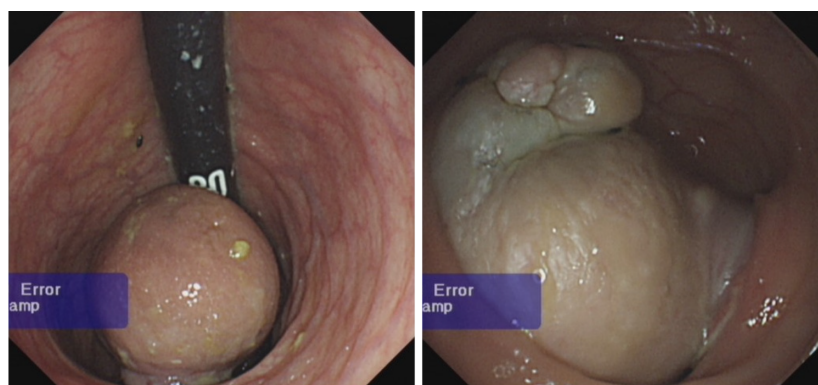
Electronic colonoscopy: Rectal mass (nature to be investigated) (Figure 1).

The computed tomography (CT) scan revealed: (1) A 6.3 cm × 4.7 cm × 5.1 cm round mass, flaky low-density shadow and calcification on center, enhanced scanning lesions with circular mild enhancement, non-enhancement on center, and clear boundary on the pelvis (unclear if this is a teratoma); and (2) Double-sided adnexal area low-density shadow (cyst) (Figure 2).

A rectal mass resection was performed *via* laparoscopy under anesthesia to alleviate the patient's symptoms.

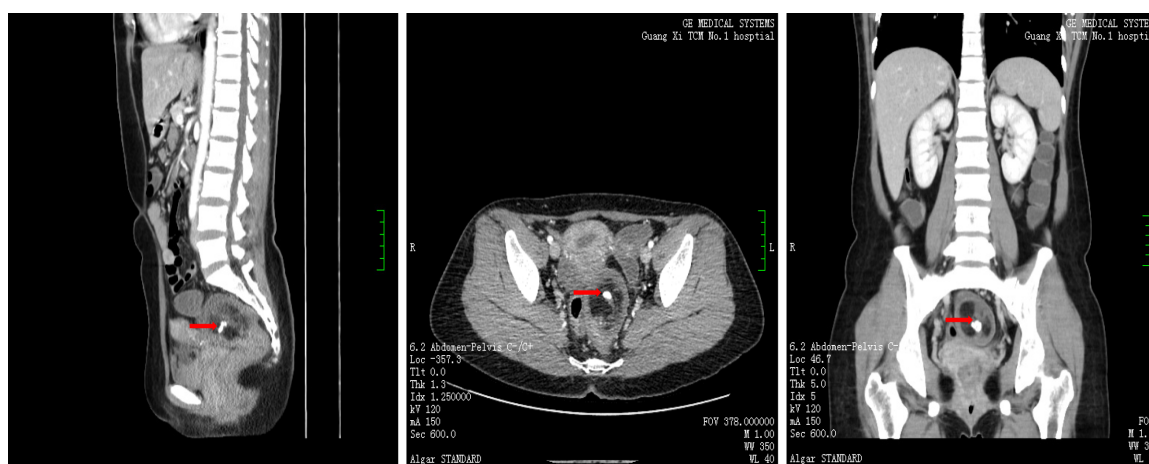
FINAL DIAGNOSIS

The condition was diagnosed as mature rectal teratoma based on the above physical examinations and imaging data.



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Figure 1 A rectal mass. Intestinal round mass was a teratoma.



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Figure 2 A rectal mass computed tomography examination. The arrow indicates the 6.3 cm × 4.7 cm × 5.1 cm mass on the left side of the pelvic rectal area.

TREATMENT

Surgical procedure

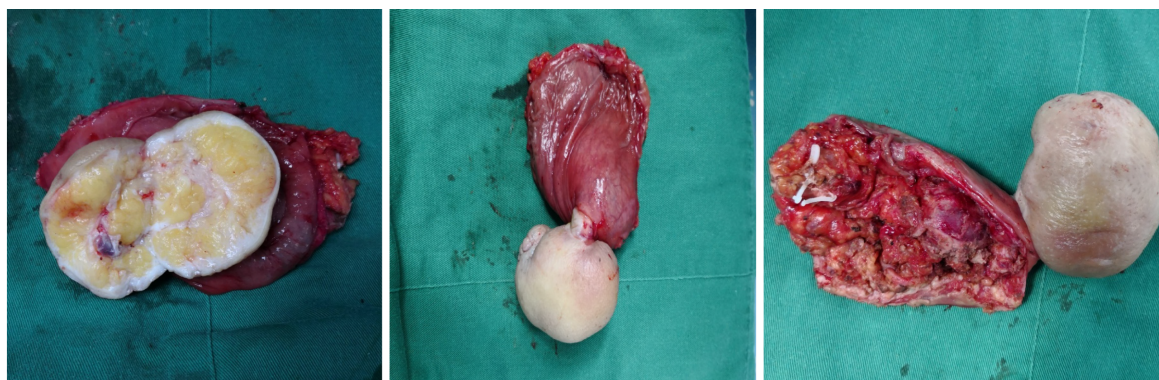
A rectal mass resection was conducted *via* laparoscopy under anesthesia. Intraoperative ligation was conducted on the sigmoid colon 10 cm above the upper edge of the tumor and on the rectal area 3.5 cm above the upper edge of the tumor, followed by complete removal of the mass. Full hemostasis, sigmoid colon and rectal suture repair, placement of a negative pressure drainage tube in the anus and abdominal cavity, and layer-by-layer suture repair of the incision was then conducted (Figure 3).

Pathological examination

In the intestinal section, two connected tumors, about 6 cm × 5 cm × 4 cm and 2 cm × 2 cm × 2 cm, were seen in the intestinal mucosa and intestinal serosal layer, respectively. In the microscopic view, skin and appendages, glands, fat, bone tissue, bone marrow tissue, and brain tissue indicated mature teratoma. No tumor tissue was seen at the two ends (upper and lower margins) after the examination. Six lymph nodes were found, and no tumor metastasis was identified (0/6). Therefore, the condition was diagnosed as mature teratoma (Figure 4).

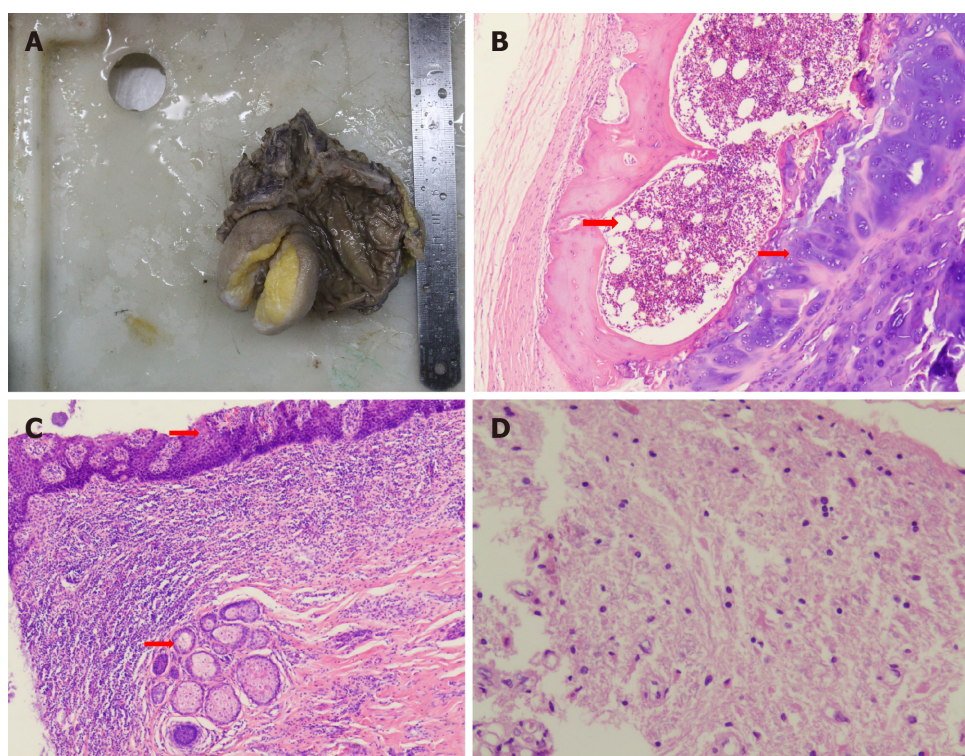
OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP

Postoperatively, the patient was discharged after healing. She returned for a follow-up in August 2018. On examination, there was evident wound healing and no tumor recurrence. Additionally, the patient was free of discomfort, pain, and fecal incontinence.



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Figure 3 Postoperative mass resection. The postoperative photograph shows that the white was mass, and the bases were in contact with the rectal area.



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Figure 4 Pathology of rectal teratoma. A: Surgical resection of pathological specimens. The mass was completely removed, and a piece was removed every 1 cm. The tissues were then fixed, dehydrated, soaked in wax, embedded, and stained with hematoxylin and eosin staining (HE); B: Rectal teratoma with bone marrow and cartilage (indicated by the arrow) (HE, 4 × 10 magnification); C: Rectal teratoma with squamous epithelium and sebaceous glands (indicated by the arrow) (HE, 4 × 10 magnification); D: Rectal teratoma with brain tissue (HE, 20 × 10 magnification).

The colonoscopy and CT scan revealed a rectal mass, 6 cm × 5 cm × 4 cm in the intestinal mucosa and 2 cm × 2 cm × 2 cm in the intestinal serosal layer, which was diagnosed as mature rectal teratoma. Laparoscopic tumor resection was conducted to remove the tumor. No tumor metastasis was found 6 mo after successful 1-mo treatment. The teratoma was located in the rectal wall, which is close to the pelvic cavity. The teratoma volume increases and breaks into the intestinal wall, and bulging occurs to the posterior wall of the rectum. The teratoma then comes out of the anus and can only be returned by hand.

DISCUSSION

Clinical reports of teratoma are common in the sacrococcygeal, appendix, ovary, testis, retroperitoneum, mediastinum, *etc.* Several studies have shown that the incidence of teratoma may be related to various

Table 1 Reported cases of rectal mature teratoma

Ref.	Year	Age/sex	Symptoms	Previous history	Method	Final diagnosis
Murdock and Abbas[25]	2010	26/female	Right-sided pelvic pain radiating down her lower extremities	Transanal drainage of a presumed presacral abscess	Laparoscopic abdomino-paracoccygeal resection	Anorectal cystic teratoma
Wang <i>et al</i> [26]	2019	44/female	Submucosal rectal mass	Not described	Laparoscopic tumor resection	Mature retrorectal teratoma
Aiken <i>et al</i> [27]	2020	47/female	Bleeding from the rectum for 10 d	Not described	Partial resection of the rectum	Rectum mature teratoma
Nam and Kim [28]	2021	68/female	Hematochezia	Not described	Polypectomy	Primary mature teratoma of the rectum
Our case	2021	29/female	Perianal mass that emerged after defecation	Not described	Laparoscopic	Rectal mature teratoma

factors, such as genetic, environmental, and gene-level regulation[4,5]. Teratoma can be divided into benign and malignant transformations based on the degree of tissue differentiation. Teratoma incidence is about 1:35000-1:40000[6] and mostly occurs in women (the ratio of male to female is about 1:2-4) with few occurrences in children and postmenopausal women[7,8]. Although mostly reported in the ovary and testis, it also occurs in the midline of the mediastinum, appendix, sacrococcygeal, pineal body, mediastinum, posterior peritoneal cavity, omentum, uterine rectum, vagina, and cervix[9-12]. Immature teratomas occur in adolescents. Most malignancies transform into cancer (squamous cell carcinoma). About 1%-2% of teratoma cases are malignant and are common in young women (the average age of onset is 11 years to 19 years) with poor prognosis[13-15]. CT images of mature teratoma reveal calcification, adipose tissue, bone, tooth, and obviously cysts[16,17].

CT scan is sensitive to calcification and fat, common and quick, and combined with enhanced scan can evaluate the soft tissue composition well. However, it lacks specificity for differentiating between tumor types. While magnetic resonance imaging has a higher resolution of fat and soft tissue, which helps to determine the retrorectal tumors and their relationships to surrounding structures and cystic degeneration, but it poorly shows calcification[18,19]. To some extent, magnetic resonance imaging is more accurate than CT to estimate the possible complications such as torsion, rupture, and malignant transformation.

Badmos *et al*[20] reported that laparoscopic surgery can enlarge the field of view, reducing the incision and intraoperative blood loss. Lee *et al*[21] also reported that laparoscopic surgery could significantly reduce the body's inflammatory response compared to open surgery. Chansoon *et al*[22] reported a case of complicated duodenal mature teratoma, which was resected *via* laparoscopic surgery. Herein, the mature cystic teratoma was identified, and the patient was discharged after the operation. No recurrence occurred after 6 mo of follow-up. Laparoscopic pelvic and teratogenic teratoma surgery is widely used because of the minimally invasive advantages. Laparoscopic surgery completely removes the tumor without damaging adjacent tissues and organs, avoiding the rupture of the tumor and preventing leakage of the teratoma, thus inhibiting malignant transformation, recurrence, and metastasis[23,24].

Murdock and Abbas[25] reported that an anorectal cystic teratoma transabdominal approach is necessary, which can be done laparoscopically safely and successfully, even for a large lesion. Wang *et al* [26] reported that it is generally not recommended to use preoperative biopsy of retrorectal tumors because of the risk of infection or tumor seeding in the pelvis. As such, a definitive diagnosis is best obtained by following complete resection of the tumor. Resection of retrorectal teratoma is generally regarded as appropriate because of the malignant potential.

Aiken *et al*[27] reported that the diagnosis can be made with endoscopy alone by the presence of hair over the mass. Nam and Kim[28] reported that the mass was removed by polypectomy because the patient's lesion was a pedunculate polyp measuring approximately 4 cm and located approximately 15 cm from the anus. Endoscopic resection was performed to make a diagnosis. Endoscopic resection is indicated for a pedunculate polyp that measures < 4 cm. If the diagnosis is unclear or malignancy cannot be excluded, surgical resection is preferable. The summaries of reported cases of rectal mature teratoma are shown in Table 1.

CONCLUSION

Rectal teratoma remains a rare disease despite a recent uptick in diagnoses. Radiological imaging is helpful to preoperative diagnosis and planning. Complete surgical excision is the treatment of choice, and regular follow-up after surgery is needed to prevent recurrence. The prognosis of mature teratomas

is excellent, and we report this case to raise awareness of this disease.

FOOTNOTES

Author contributions: Liu JL and Sun PL designed the research and equally contributed to this work; Liu JL and Sun PL provided figure legends; Liu JL and Sun PL drafted the manuscript; All authors reviewed and approved the final submitted manuscript.

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