Pharyngoesophageal perforation during introduction of an echoendoscope treated with a fully covered self-expandable metal stent

A 69-year-old woman with a history of renal transplantation was investigated for biliary duct dilation. She was receiving treatment with prednisone and tacrolimus. Echoendoscopy was performed with a radial scope (Olympus GF-UE160) with the patient under conscious sedation. During introduction of the endoscope, perforation was observed in the pharyngoesophageal area. The decision was made to place a fully covered self-expandable metal stent (23×12 mm; Wallflex, Boston Scientific), completely covering the defect in the oropharynx (▶Fig. 1). The patient was intubated first to avoid the discomfort caused by the stent, and was then moved to the resuscitation unit. The stent was removed 5 days later with apparent resolution of the perforation. Computed tomography (CT) and a barium esophagogram confirmed resolution of the defect (▶Fig. 2; ▶Fig. 3). A small fluid collection at the mediastinum without air bubbles, shown on CT (▶Fig. 2), was treated conservatively with antibiotics (▶Video 1). The patient recovered completely with no symptoms of dysphagia.

Iatrogenic oropharyngeal perforation is a rare complication of echoendoscopy, occurring in 0.03% of explorations [1,2]. The rate is probably higher with echoendoscopes and duodenoscopes because of their rigidity and lateral or oblique viewing. In the oropharynx, it is not possi-
ble to close a perforation with either nor-

mal or over-the-scope clips. Other cases
have been published in which resolution of
the defect in 3 days was reported
[3, 4], but because our patient was being
treated with prednisone, we preferred to
delay removal of the stent.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no con-

flict of interest.

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