Cricopharyngeal peroral endoscopic myotomy for achalasia of the cricopharynx: “to do or not to do”

Cricopharyngeal achalasia is a rarely reported [1] entity traditionally treated by surgery [2]. The video shows two cases referred to our unit for cricopharyngeal peroral endoscopic myotomy (C-POEM).

The first case was a 40-year-old woman with a 2-year history of cervical dysphagia requiring enteral feeding. Previous gastroscopy, barium transit, and high resolution manometry (HRM) were compatible with cricopharyngeal achalasia. A neck ultrasound and computed tomography (CT) without intravenous contrast supported the diagnosis. During the endoscopy for C-POEM, an upper compression that flattened with the endoscope and presented a beat was observed. An urgent angio-CT diagnosed the patient with lusoria dysphagia. Therefore, no endoscopic treatment was performed and the patient was referred for vascular bypass surgery.

The second case was an 83-year-old man with upper dysphagia and laryngeal microaspirations. Barium transit showed an upper posterior imprint (▶Video 1) and HRM was compatible with cricopharyngeal achalasia. At gastroscopy, it was not possible to pass the upper esophageal sphincter. A CT scan with contrast ruled out extrinsic compressions. The patient was reluctant to undergo therapeutic maneuvers and accepted a treatment with botulinum toxin, which subsequently worsened the symptoms. Videoradiology and a new manometry reaffirmed the diagnosis of cricopharyngeal achalasia.

▶Fig. 1 Cricopharyngeal bar.

▶Fig. 2 Myotomy of the cricopharyngeal bar. a Exposed cricopharyngeal bar. b Complete cricopharyngeal bar myotomy. c Disappearance of the bar from the esophageal lumen after myotomy.
Finally, the patient agreed to undergo C-POEM. After initial tunneling without cap owing to the limited space, a myotomy of the cricopharyngeal bar (▶ Fig. 1) was performed with subsequent closure of the mucosotomy with clips (▶ Fig. 2). The patient experienced immediate symptomatic improvement that was confirmed by barium transit (▶ Fig. 3), and remained asymptomatic after 5 months. Cricopharyngeal achalasia without Zenker’s diverticulum requires careful diagnosis to exclude other causes of upper dysphagia. The limited space due to the cricopharyngeal bar can make endoscopic diagnosis and treatment difficult. Working without a cap at the beginning of the procedure led to successful completion of the myotomy.

Endoscopy_UCTN_Code_TTT_1AO_2AN

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

The authors

Eduardo Albéniz 1, 2, Fermín Estremera-Arevalo 1, Pedro J. Rosón 3, Francisco Fernandez Cano 4, María L. Heredia 5, Sauid Ishaq 6, 7, Juan J. Vila 1

1 Endoscopy Unit, Gastroenterology Department, Complejo Hospitalario de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
2 Navarrabiomed Biomedical Research Center, Public University of Navarre, Navarre Institute for Health Research, Pamplona, Spain
3 Gastroenterology Endoscopy Unit, Hospital Quirónsalud Málaga, Málaga, Spain
4 Digestive System and Endoscopy Unit, Hospital Quirónsalud Málaga, Málaga, Spain
5 Gastroenterology Department, Mateu Orfila General Hospital, Mahón, Spain
6 Health and Science, Birmingham City University, Birmingham, United Kingdom
7 University of Birmingham, Russells Hall Hospital, Birmingham, United Kingdom

References


Bibliography

Endoscopy

DOI 10.1055/a-1544-7677
ISSN 0013-726X
published online 2021
© 2021, Thieme. All rights reserved.
Georg Thieme Verlag KG, Rüdigerstraße 14, 70469 Stuttgart, Germany

ENDOSCOPY E-VIDEOS

https://eref.thieme.de/e-videos

Endoscopy E-Videos is a free access online section, reporting on interesting cases and new techniques in gastroenterological endoscopy. All papers include a high quality video and all contributions are freely accessible online.

This section has its own submission website at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/e-videos

Corresponding author

Eduardo Albéniz, MD, PhD
Endoscopy Unit, Gastroenterology Department, Complejo Hospitalario de Navarra, Irunlarrea 3, 31008, Navarra, Spain edualbeniz@hotmail.com