Combined endoscopic and surgical management of a right intrahepatic bile duct injury during laparoscopic cholecystectomy

Biliary tract wounds are a rare complication of cholecystectomy [1]. They lead to the appearance of intra- or extrahepatic biliary stenosis, which usually requires endoscopic treatment [2–4]. They occur mainly when inflammation persists after cholecystitis or angiocholitis. The direct connection of the right posterior bile duct to the common hepatic duct is a well-known anatomical variant of the biliary tract, which can lead to the sectioning of the right posterior bile duct during cholecystectomy [1]. We report here the case of a 70-year-old woman who underwent laparoscopic cholecystectomy following acute cholecystitis. During the procedure, bile flow was found after sectioning of the cystic duct. Intraoperative opacification of the biliary tract showed it being in fact the right posterior bile duct. At the same time, an endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) with endoscopic sphincterotomy was performed. After biliary wound catheterization, the guidewire was introduced inside the right posterior bile ducts laparoscopically (Fig. 1). A 7 Fr × 15 cm plastic biliary stent was then placed under endoscopic, fluoroscopic, and laparoscopic guidance inside the right posterior bile ducts to aid healing of the bile duct (Video 1).

Magnetic resonance imaging of the biliary tract was performed 2 months later (Fig. 2). It did not reveal any anomaly of the bile ducts and the stent was still in place. A new ERCP was performed to
remove the stent. Retrograde cholangiography found no biliary leakage but instead satisfactory opacification of the entire biliary tree (▶ Fig. 3).

This case illustrates the effectiveness of immediate and joint management of biliary leakage during cholecystectomy. The immediate stent placement aided healing but also ensured patency of the injured bile duct and thus avoided the occurrence of biliary stenosis [5].

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

The authors

Pierre Mayer1,2, Pierre Héroin1,2, François Habersetzer1-3, Michel Vix4, Patrick Pessaux2,4, Emanuele Felli2,4 and Guillaume Mathis2,4

1 Department of Hepatology and Gastroenterology, Pôle Hépato-digestif, Nouvel Hôpital Civil, Hôpitaux Universitaires de Strasbourg (HUS), Strasbourg, France

2 IHU-Strasbourg (Institut Hospitalo-Universitaire), Strasbourg, France

3 Inserm U1110, Institute for Viral and Liver Diseases, LabEx HepSYS, University of Strasbourg, Faculty of Medicine, Strasbourg, France

4 Department of Visceral and Digestive Surgery Pôle Hépato-digestif, Nouvel Hôpital Civil, Hôpitaux Universitaires de Strasbourg (HUS), Strasbourg, France

Corresponding author

Pierre Mayer, MD
Department of Hepatology and Gastroenterology, Pôle Hépato-digestif, Nouvel Hôpital Civil, Hôpitaux Universitaires de Strasbourg (HUS), 1, place de l’hôpital, 67000 Strasbourg, France

pierre-emmanuel.mayer@chru-strasbourg.fr

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