A 3-Fr microcatheter is suitable for a 0.018-inch guidewire during endoscopic ultrasound-guided biliary drainage

A combination of a 22-gauge needle and a 0.018-inch guidewire has become popular for patients with an insufficiently dilated bile duct during endoscopic ultrasound-guided biliary drainage (EUS-BD) [1–3]. However, this combination has several disadvantages, including an insufficient contrast-filled image and limited ability to manipulate the guidewire because of the slimness [1]. Although the catheter must be inserted into the bile duct across the fistula in a challenging situation of this kind, advancing a conventional catheter over a 0.018-inch guidewire can sometimes be difficult because of the gap between the guidewire and the catheter. Here, we report the first use of a new 3-Fr microcatheter that we produced previously [4], which has the following advantages for use with a 0.018-inch guidewire during EUS-BD: (i) it allows easy insertion because of its slimness and flexibility, (ii) it provides a sufficient contrast-filled image, (iii) it assists in manipulating the guidewire to advance into the target space, (iv) it avoids unnecessary dilation until needed, and (v) it allows exchange of the guidewire from 0.018-inch to 0.025-inch to provide support for device insertion (▶ Fig. 1).

Case 1: A 68-year-old woman, who previously underwent right hepatectomy for hilar cholangiocarcinoma, developed obstructive cholangitis requiring EUS-guided hepaticogastrostomy. The advancement of a conventional catheter over the 0.018-inch guidewire failed, whereas the 3-Fr microcatheter was advanced (▶ Fig. 2) and a partially covered metal stent successfully deployed.

Case 2: A 53-year-old man with obstructive jaundice after subtotal gastrectomy for gastric cancer underwent EUS-guided hepaticojejunostomy. The 0.018-inch guidewire with the 3-Fr microcatheter successfully passed the malignant biliary obstruction (▶ Fig. 3); an uncovered metal stent (8 × 60 mm) and a plastic stent (7 Fr; 14 cm) were deployed in an antegrade fashion (▶ Video 1).
Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

The authors

Akihisa Kato, Michihiro Yoshida, Kent Kachi, Yasuki Hori, Itaru Naitoh, Kazuki Hayashi, Hiromi Kataoka

Department of Gastroenterology and Metabolism, Nagoya City University Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Nagoya, Japan

Corresponding author

Michihiro Yoshida, MD, PhD

Department of Gastroenterology and Metabolism, Nagoya City University Graduate School of Medical Sciences, 1 Kawasumi, Mizuho-cho, Mizuho-ku, Nagoya 467-8601, Japan

mityoshi@med.nagoya-cu.ac.jp

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Video 1 A new 3-Fr microcatheter employed as a catheter for a 0.018-inch guidewire during endoscopic ultrasound-guided biliary drainage.

It has the following advantages:

i) allows easy insertion because of its slimmness and flexibility
ii) provides a sufficient contrast-filled image
iii) assists in manipulating the guidewire to advance into the target space
iv) avoids unnecessary dilatation until needed
v) allows exchange of the guidewire from 0.018-inch to 0.025-inch.