A 55-year-old woman with a pelvic fracture was referred by the orthopedic department at our hospital for severe hypoproteinemia. The patient had been diagnosed as having primary intestinal lymphangiectasia at the age of 25. Under capsule endoscopy, numerous filiform-like polyps with whitish villi were observed from the distal duodenum to the jejunum (Fig. 1a) with exudation of a chylous substance from the mucosal surface (Fig. 1b). These became obscure as the capsule advanced, with diminutive whitish spots or mosaic mucosal patterns as the only findings in the middle and the distal part of the small bowel. Oral double-balloon endoscopy (DBE) also identified numerous filiform-like polyps as well as diminutive whitish spots in the distal duodenum and in the jejunum (Fig. 2).

Histologic examination of the biopsy specimens taken from the whitish mucosa showed obviously dilated lymphatics in the lamina propria mucosa (Fig. 3), compatible with the diagnosis of intestinal lymphangiectasia.

Endoscopic findings suggest that intestinal lymphangiectasia should be considered among the differential diagnoses in patients with small intestinal polyps found by capsule endoscopy or DBE. On such occasions, alterations in the surrounding mucosa characterized by whitish villi and chylous exudates could be indicative of intestinal lymphangiectasia.

Competing interests: None
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Endoscopy 2010; 42: E281 – E282
© Georg Thieme Verlag KG Stuttgart · New York · ISSN 0013-726X

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