

Rectal tonsil associated with Epstein–Barr virus

Reactive polypoid proliferation of lymphoid tissue has been described along the gastrointestinal tract [1]. Endoscopically, when a non-lymphomatous lymphoid reaction resembling tonsillar tissue is present in the rectum, the polyp is named as “rectal tonsil”. Few cases have been reported in the literature [1,2], and the etiology of this rare condition is unknown [3–5].

Here we describe the case of a 58-year-old man referred to our center with a 6-month history of fresh bleeding from the rectum. A colonoscopy was performed and a delineated round, reddish, nodular aggregate measuring 4×3×3 cm was found (▶ Fig. 1). A polypectomy was performed (▶ Fig. 2), and histological examination (▶ Fig. 3) revealed infiltration of mucosa, submucosa, and lamina propria of the colon by numerous lymphoid follicles. Immunohistochemical markers were positive for CD20+(B cells), and intraepithelial lymphocytes were positive for CD3+(T cells). Epstein–Barr virus encoded RNA in situ hybridization was positive (▶ Fig. 3f).

At 1- and 6-month follow-up, there was no recurrence of the lesion in the rectum. This case represents the first case of rectal tonsil associated with Epstein–Barr virus infection.

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Competing interests: None

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Fig. 1 a Colonoscopy revealed a well-delineated, round, reddish, nodular aggregate measuring 4×3×3 cm, with follicles resembling the tonsils. b High definition colonoscopy using a digital filter (i-Scan 2, Pentax) emphasized the nodular component of the lesion.

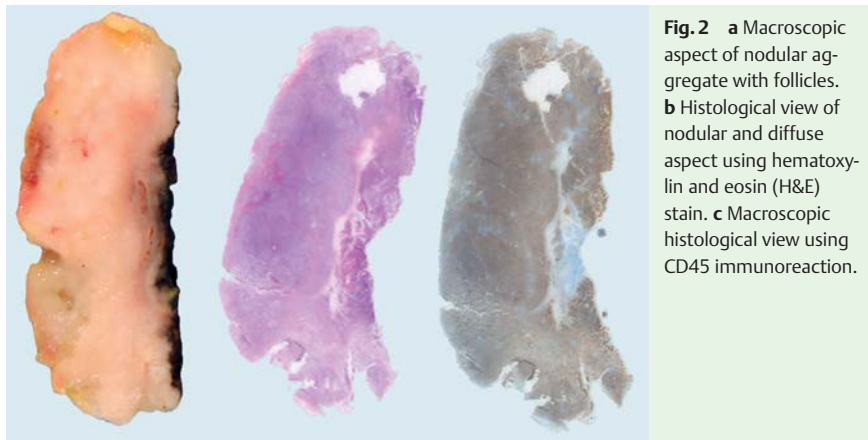


Fig. 2 a Macroscopic aspect of nodular aggregate with follicles. b Histological view of nodular and diffuse aspect using hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stain. c Macroscopic histological view using CD45 immunoreaction.

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▶ Fig. 3 see following page.

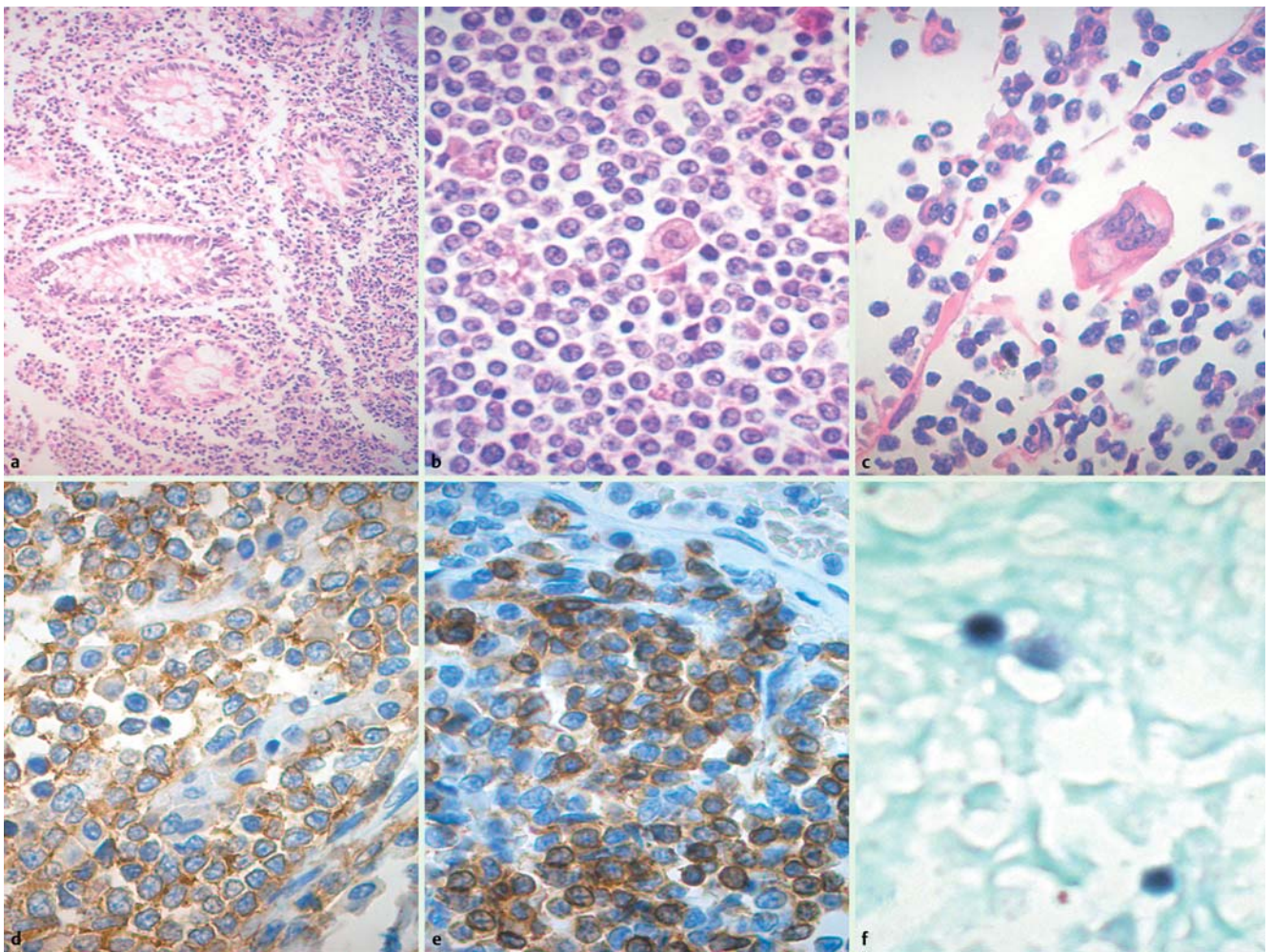


Fig. 3 a Residual colonic crypts; hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stain, $\times 200$. b Reactive lymphocytes and isolated immunoblasts (H&E stain, $\times 800$). c Binucleate reactive Reed–Sternberg-like cells (H&E stain, $\times 800$). d Positive CD20 immunoreaction. e Positive CD3 immunoreaction. f Epstein–Barr virus-encoded RNA was positive (in situ hybridization for Epstein–Barr virus).