Two patients with follicular lymphoma of the gastrointestinal tract were referred to our institution for capsule endoscopy. The first patient, a man aged 64 years, had undergone esophagogastroduodenoscopy, which had shown a whitish, granular, elevated area in the descending duodenum (Figure 1). The second patient, a 60-year-old woman, had a flat protrusion in the rectum (Figure 2). In both cases, endoscopic biopsy of these lesions revealed follicular lymphoma (Figure 3).

In patient 1, capsule endoscopy images showed patchy whitish nodules in the proximal and middle parts of the small intestine (Figure 4) [1]. The capsule study also identified thickened mucosal folds with ulceration in the proximal part of the small intestine. However, no apparent abnormality was found in the distal part of the small intestine. Based on the capsule endoscopic and computed tomographic findings, the clinical stage was assessed as stage II [2]. We treated the patient with rituximab, cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, vincristine, and prednisolone (R-CHOP) chemotherapy. Repeat capsule endoscopy after six cycles of R-CHOP therapy showed an obvious improvement in the intestinal disease. In patient 2, capsule endoscopy detected diminutive whitish granules and white villi in the proximal and middle parts of the small intestine (Figure 5), but, again, no mucosal lesions in the distal small intestine. Because her gastrointestinal lymphoma was assessed as being stage I [2], and because it was not causing any clinical symptoms, the patient was not given any aggressive treatment but has been kept under careful observation. The lymphoma has not progressed during the subsequent period of 2 years.

Follicular lymphoma, which accounts for 1.5–3% of primary gastrointestinal lymphomas [3], is believed to involve the terminal ileum and to develop into obstructing intramural masses [4]. Our cases suggest that whitish nodules and granules in the upper part of the small intestine are characteristic findings that
help differentiate follicular lymphoma from other histologic types. Capsule endoscopy could therefore become an essential procedure for the diagnosis of follicular lymphoma of the gastrointestinal tract.

References


Corresponding author

M. Esaki, MD
Department of Medicine and Clinical Science
Graduate School of Medical Sciences
Kyushu University
Maidashi 3-1-1
Higashi-ku
Fukuoka 812-8582
Japan
Fax: +81-92-642-5273
Email: mesaki@intmed2.med.kyushu-u.ac.jp

M. Esaki, T. Matsumoto, S. Nakamura, H. Suekane, Y. Ohji, T. Yao, M. Iida
1. Department of Medicine and Clinical Science, Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan
2. Division of Gastroenterology, Yamaguchi Red Cross Hospital, Yamaguchi, Japan
3. Department of Anatomic Pathology, Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan.