Food entrapped in papilla of Vater: uncommon cause of vomiting

D Falchetti, P Pedersini, W Rigamonti, P Salucci, G Caccia

Abstract

Case report—A 20 month old girl was admitted for intractable vomiting over several days, with no other symptoms. Family and personal history were not contributive. Clinical and neurological examination, and routine blood tests and investigations (plain abdominal x ray, upper gastrointestinal tract contrast study, abdominal ultrasonography) were normal. The upper gastrointestinal endoscopy showed a mild antral gastritis and the second portion of duodenum was occupied by a tough, fibrous mass partially embedded into the papilla of Vater. The foreign body was removed and proved to be vegetable fibre (pineapple). Symptoms subsided immediately and the child was discharged with gastroprotective therapy. After two months, on endoscopic examination, the signs of gastropathy had cleared; the papilla of Vater was undamaged, but unchomped food debris was again found in the duodenum.

Discussion—There are sporadic reports of foreign bodies retained into the papilla of Vater, all of them in adults. This child, though her papilla was tiny, had no jaundice or pancreatitis, unlike most of the reported cases. This is the first report of this finding in a child. The cause of the vomiting was not shown on abdominal ultrasonography or contrast study. It should be added to the list of unusual causes of vomiting.
symptom in this condition, and vomiting is seldom described.

In the case presented, the impacted foreign body did not cause biliopancreatic flow obstruction, despite the tiny dimensions of the papilla. The only effect was increasing vomiting, probably on a reflex basis. Endoscopy is necessary to show this lesion.

5 Dann JJ. Two cases of acute pancreatitis due to foreign body. Gastroint Endosc 1986;32:360–1.

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