

A rare case of ascites and pleural effusion following emergency caesarean section

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Case Report – Intrapartum

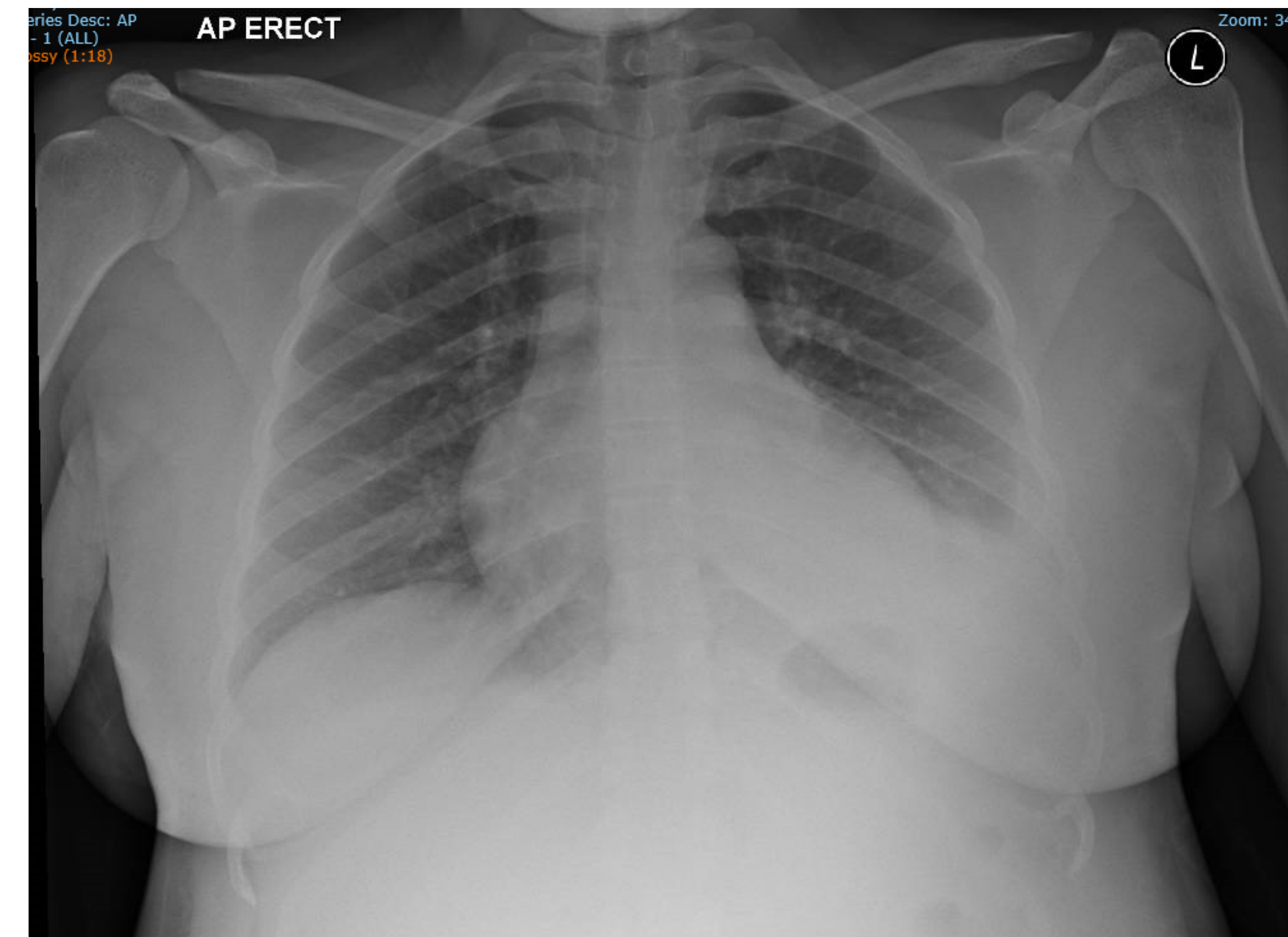
- 32 year old para one presented with vaginal bleeding at 40+6
- Admitted for balloon IOL
- Had Category 2 Caesarean section for suspected placental abruption following CTG concerns and further bleeding
- 1400mls blood loss but otherwise uncomplicated

Case Report – Postnatal D1-15

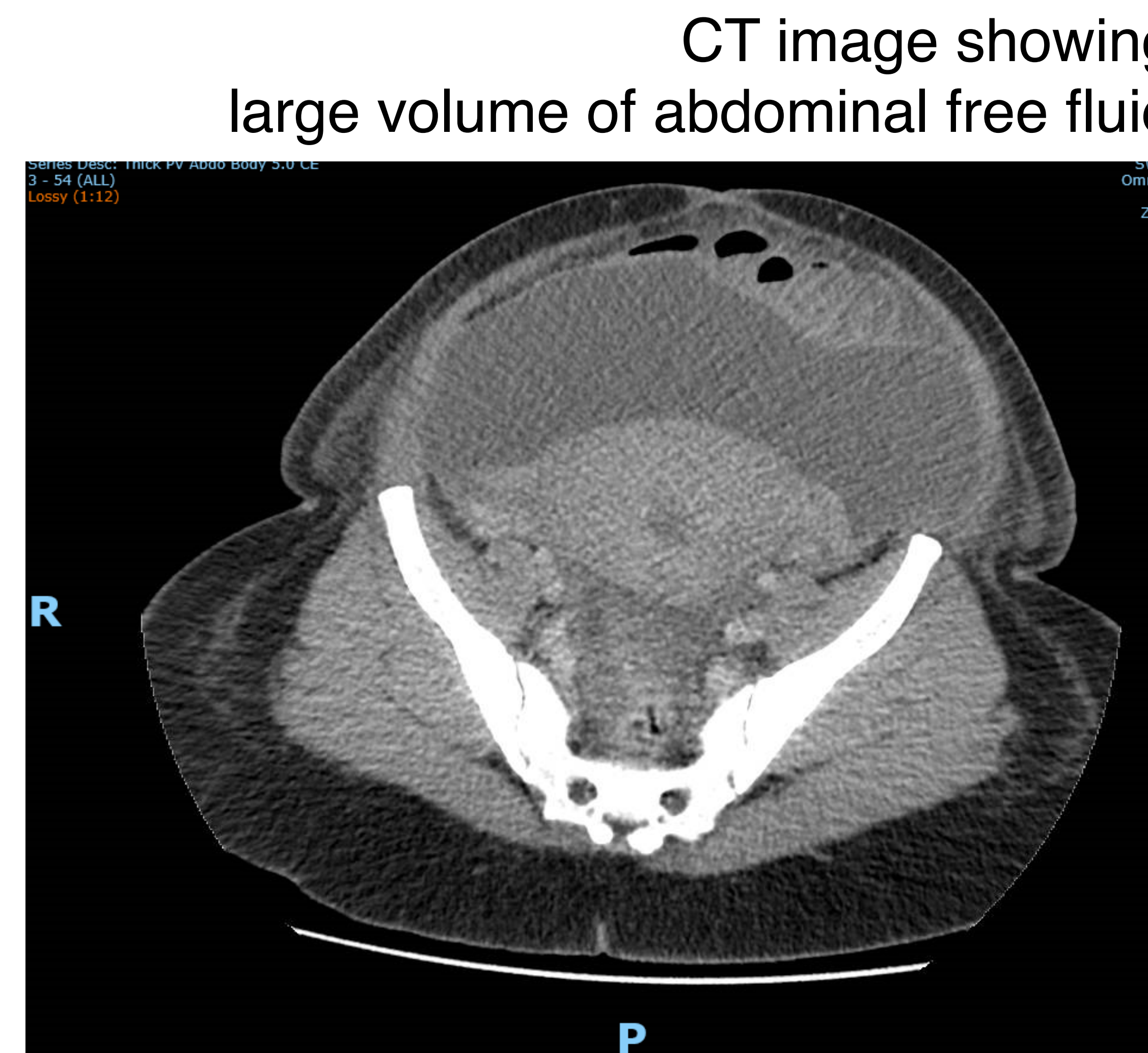
- Temperature spike on D3 lasted until D15 despite multiple IV antibiotics
- D3 had CTPA - NAD
- Treated for pyrexia of unknown origin
- Had CXR which showed pleural effusion and cardiomegaly
- Cardiology ruled out cardiac failure
- D10 had USS which showed ascites and normal uterine appearance for 10 days post section

Case Report – Postnatal D15-31

- CT repeated on D17 showed large volume ascites
- Drained twice by Interventional Radiology
- As still spiking temperatures following MDT discussion decision for return to theatre for washout
- No further temperatures post-operatively
- Home on D31



CXR showing left lower lobe collapse and left pleural effusion



CT image showing large volume of abdominal free fluid

Discussion

- Pleural effusion and ascites have multiple causes:
 - Malignancy
 - Liver cirrhosis
 - Cardiac failure
 - Post-operative complications
 - Infection
 - Inflammatory causes
- Following multiple investigations all ruled out except infection and inflammatory causes in this case
- MDT input essential to recognise complex post-operative complications and select treatment strategies
- This patient had input from General Medicine, Gastroenterology, General Surgeons, Cardiology and Interventional Radiology
- MBBRACE 2022 reiterated importance of MDT working to prevent maternal mortality in complex cases as highlighted here.

Conclusion

- Pleural effusion and ascites are a rare complication of caesarean section
- Important to rule out potential causes including iatrogenic injury before attributing to infection and inflammatory causes
- Patients might not make a full recovery until a washout has been performed