The Rare Face of Gallbladder Volvulus: A Dive into Uncommon Presentation

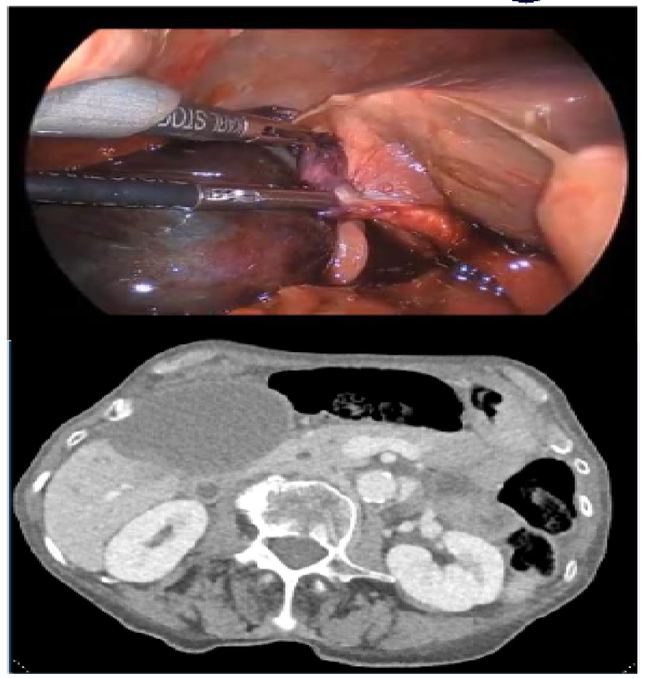
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INTRODUCTION

- Gallbladder volvulus is a rare condition characterized by the twisting of the gallbladder around its mesentery leading to impaired blood flow and gangrene. The atypical presentation of this condition often poses diagnostic challenges.
- This case demonstrates the importance of considering gallbladder volvulus in the differential diagnosis of abdominal pain, even when initial laboratory findings and imaging are unremarkable.

PATIENT AND METHODS

- An 89-year-old woman with an unremarkable medical history presented with severe epigastric pain radiating to the right upper quadrant, nausea, and no prior similar episodes. She was hemodynamically stable but had significant pain and tenderness.
- Lab tests, including white blood cell count and liver function, were normal. Ultrasound and cross-sectional imaging revealed a distended gallbladder with an edematous wall and possible ischemic changes.
- She was offered diagnostic laparoscopy and cholecystectomy for presumed acute acalculous cholecystitis.



RESULTS

- The patient underwent laparoscopic cholecystectomy.
- Diagnostic laparoscopy revealed an ischemic gangrenous gallbladder, twisted along its mesenteric axis.
- Minimal attachment to the liver from the posterior wall led to the volvulus.
- The gallbladder was untwisted, exposing the infundibulum. The cystic artery and duct were thrombosed and narrowed. The critical view was achieved, and both were controlled with clips.
- The gallbladder was detached without perforation. The procedure lasted 80 minutes with minimal blood loss.
- The patient was discharged on day 3. Final histopathology confirmed an ischemic/necrotic gallbladder.

CONCLUSION

- Volvulus is a rare, serious condition requiring high clinical suspicion, especially in elderly patients with atypical symptoms.
- In early stages, it may compress the artery and vein, preventing the release of inflammatory markers and leading to normal lab results, making diagnosis challenging.
- This case highlights the importance of considering gallbladder volvulus in acute abdominal pain, with a thorough physical exam crucial when lab and imaging results are inconsistent. Prompt surgical intervention is vital for the best outcome.