

Mucosal Injury Caused by Alkali Ingestion

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1. Clinical Image

A 73-year-old man with history of chronic pulmonary disease presented with melena stool after ingestion of unknown amount of sodium hydroxide-containing household cleaning product. The episode took place 10 days ago and the patient was examined by otorhinolaryngologist who recognized edema of the arytenoid folds. He was hospitalized for 5 days and then he was discharged. Later on course, melena stool appeared, leading to a repeat hospitalization. A nasogastric tube was placed, proton pump inhibitors were administered at 8mg/h and sucralfate through the tube was ingested. At day 30 after the initial episode, gastroscopy was performed revealing extensive corrosive gastritis, focal necrosis, large amount of fresh blood was present in the stomach restricting the endoscopic view and pyloric stenosis, non-fordable from the endoscope (a). According to the Zargar classification the lesions were characterized as IIIa [1]. In order to assess the extension of the stenosis barium swallow study was performed which illustrated retention of the contrast in the stomach (b). The patient aspirated the contrast and this caused acute respiratory failure, leading to intubation (c). Barium aspiration has been described as a cause of exacerbation of chronic pulmonary disease [2]. The nasogastric tube drained, daily, fresh blood and the patient was transfused with 11 units of packed red blood cells. Two weeks later, a repeat endoscopy revealed a slight improvement of the mucosal injury and the need for transfusions was reduced. Therefore, after surgical consultation, decision was made to place a feeding jejunostomy and to continue pharmaceutical treatment, thus, avoiding total gastrectomy [3]. Interestingly, 6 days after the placement of the feeding jejunostomy the bleeding recurred with the presence of large amount of fresh blood in the nasogastric tube (1200 ml of blood).

The hemodynamic status of the patient deteriorated rapidly, he became unstable and death occurred a few hours later.



(a)



(b)



(c)

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