



Flood syndrome : A Rare yet Underrecognised Complication of Cirrhosis

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Abstract

Flood Syndrome is a condition commonly seen in patients with decompensated cirrhosis; however, it currently lacks definitive treatment options. We through this editorial aim to raise awareness about this interesting yet serious condition.

Keywords: Chronic Liver Disease (CLD); Flood Syndrome

Introduction

Decompensated cirrhosis can have various presentations, with ascites being the most common manifestation. The presence of ascites is associated with an overall poor prognosis [1].

Umbilical hernias are observed in approximately 20% of patients with chronic liver disease (CLD) and ascites [2]. The spontaneous rupture of an umbilical hernia in a patient with CLD and ascites is known as Flood syndrome [2]. This syndrome was first described by Dr. Frank Flood in 1961 [3]. The name refers to the sudden gushing of ascitic fluid that occurs following rupture of the umbilical hernia in a CLD patient [4].

The main mechanism leading to Flood syndrome involves an abnormal increase in intra-abdominal pressure secondary to ascites, along with dilated periumbilical blood vessels that cause fascial defects in the abdominal wall [2]. This may potentially lead to infecti-

on and can be life-threatening if not managed promptly; therefore, surgical intervention is often required [2].

Currently, no definitive medical treatment exists for the management of this condition, and therapy primarily revolves around management of ascites and surgical intervention, that is repair of the hernia [5,6].

However, there are certain limitations to surgery, including patients having acute liver failure, acute viral hepatitis, coagulopathy, low platelet count and acute renal failure [7].

Early recognition and management of Flood syndrome are crucial, especially in patients awaiting liver transplantation. These patients should be examined on every opd visits to their general practitioners or hepatologists and counselled regarding their diet, advised to avoid lifting heavy weights and prevent constipation from occurring [6].

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