World Journal of Clinical Cases

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## MINIREVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4688</td>
<td>Relationship between non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and coronary heart disease</td>
<td>Arslan U, Yenerçag M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Retrospective Cohort Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4700</td>
<td>Remission of hepatotoxicity in chronic pulmonary aspergillosis patients after lowering trough concentration of voriconazole</td>
<td>Teng GJ, Bai XR, Zhang L, Liu HJ, Nie XH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Retrospective Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4708</td>
<td>Endoscopic submucosal dissection as alternative to surgery for complicated gastric heterotopic pancreas</td>
<td>Noh JH, Kim DH, Kim SW, Park YS, Na HK, Ahn JY, Jung KW, Lee JH, Choi KD, Song HJ, Lee GH, Jung HY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4735</td>
<td>Sleep quality of patients with postoperative glioma at home</td>
<td>Huang Y, Jiang ZJ, Deng J, Qi YJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4743</td>
<td>Early complications of preoperative external traction fixation in the staged treatment of tibial fractures: A series of 402 cases</td>
<td>Yang JZ, Zhu WB, Li LB, Dong QR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4763</td>
<td>Undifferentiated embryonal sarcoma of the liver: Clinical characteristics and outcomes</td>
<td>Zhang C, Jia CJ, Xu C, Sheng QJ, Dou XG, Ding Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4773</td>
<td>Cerebral infarct secondary to traumatic internal carotid artery dissection</td>
<td>Wang GM, Xue H, Guo ZJ, Yu JL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4785</td>
<td>Home-based nursing for improvement of quality of life and depression in patients with postpartum depression</td>
<td>Zhuang CY, Lin SY, Cheng CJ, Chen XJ, Shi HL, Sun H, Zhang HY, Fu MA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Contents

### Observational Study

4793  
Cost-effectiveness of lutetium ($^{177}$Lu) oxodotreotide vs everolimus in gastroenteropancreatic neuroendocrine tumors in Norway and Sweden  
*Palmer J, Leeuwenkamp OR*

4807  
Factors related to improved American Spinal Injury Association grade of acute traumatic spinal cord injury  
*Tian C, Lv Y, Li S, Wang DD, Bai Y, Zhou F, Ma QB*

4816  
Intraoperative systemic vascular resistance is associated with postoperative nausea and vomiting after laparoscopic hysterectomy  

### META-ANALYSIS

4826  
Underwater vs conventional endoscopic mucosal resection in treatment of colorectal polyps: A meta-analysis  
*Ni DQ, Lu YP, Liu XQ, Gao LY, Huang X*

### CASE REPORT

4838  
Dehydrated patient without clinically evident cause: A case report  
*Palladino F, Fedele MC, Casertano M, Liguori L, Esposito T, Guarino S, Miraglia del Giudice E, Marzuillo P*

4844  
Intracranial malignant solitary fibrous tumor metastasized to the chest wall: A case report and review of literature  
*Usuda D, Yamada S, Izumida T, Sangen R, Higashikawa T, Nakagawa K, Iguchi M, Kasamaki Y*

4853  
End-of-life home care of an interstitial pneumonia patient supported by high-flow nasal cannula therapy: A case report  
*Goda K, Kenzaka T, Kuriyama K, Hoshijima M, Akita H*

4858  
Rupture of carotid artery pseudoaneurysm in the modern era of definitive chemoradiation for head and neck cancer: Two case reports  
*Kim M, Hong JH, Park SK, Kim SJ, Lee JH, Byun J, Ko YH*

4866  
Unremitting diarrhoea in a girl diagnosed anti-N-methyl-D-aspartate-receptor encephalitis: A case report  
*Onpoaree N, Veeravigrom M, Sanpavat A, Suratannon N, Sintusek P*

4876  
Paliperidone palmitate-induced facial angioedema: A case report  
*Srijuengfong M, Sukakul T, Liangcheep C, Viravan N*

4883  
Improvement of lenvatinib-induced nephrotic syndrome after adaptation to sorafenib in thyroid cancer: A case report  
*Yang CH, Chen KT, Lin YS, Hsu CY, Ou YC, Tung MC*

4895  
Adult metaplastic hutch diverticulum with robotic-assisted diverticulectomy and reconstruction: A case report  
*Yang CH, Lin YS, Ou YC, Weng WC, Huang LH, Lu CH, Hsu CY, Tung MC*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4902</td>
<td>Thrombus straddling a patent foramen ovale and pulmonary embolism: A case report</td>
<td>Huang YX, Chen Y, Cao Y, Qiu YG, Zheng JY, Li TC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4917</td>
<td>Woven coronary artery: A case report</td>
<td>Wei W, Zhang Q, Gao LM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4922</td>
<td>Idiopathic multicentric Castleman disease with pulmonary and cutaneous lesions treated with tocilizumab: A case report</td>
<td>Han PY, Chi HH, Su YT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4930</td>
<td>Perianorectal abscesses and fistula due to ingested jujube pit in infant: Two case reports</td>
<td>Liu YH, Lv ZB, Liu JB, Sheng QF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4946</td>
<td>Systemic autoimmune abnormalities complicated by cytomegalovirus-induced hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis: A case report</td>
<td>Miao SX, Wu ZQ, Xu HG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4953</td>
<td>Nasal mucosa pyoderma vegetans associated with ulcerative colitis: A case report</td>
<td>Yu SX, Cheng XK, Li B, Hao JH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4958</td>
<td>Amiodarone-induced hepatotoxicity — quantitative measurement of iodine density in the liver using dual-energy computed tomography: Three case reports</td>
<td>Lv HJ, Zhao HW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4966</td>
<td>Multisystem involvement Langerhans cell histiocytosis in an adult: A case report</td>
<td>Wang BB, Ye JR, Li YL, Jin Y, Chen ZW, Li JM, Li YP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4981</td>
<td>Catastrophic vertebral artery and subclavian artery pseudoaneurysms caused by a fishbone: A case report</td>
<td>Huang W, Zhang GQ, Wu JJ, Li B, Han SG, Chao M, Jin K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Contents

**World Journal of Clinical Cases**  
Semimonthly Volume 8 Number 20 October 26, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5013</td>
<td>Massive gastrointestinal bleeding caused by a Dieulafoy’s lesion in a duodenal diverticulum: A case report</td>
<td>He ZW, Zhong L, Xu H, Shi H, Wang YM, Liu XC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5019</td>
<td>Plastic bronchitis associated with <em>Botrytis cinerea</em> infection in a child: A case report</td>
<td>Liu YR, Ai T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5025</td>
<td>Chest, pericardium, abdomen, and thigh penetrating injury by a steel rebar: A case report</td>
<td>Yang XW, Wang WT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5030</td>
<td>Monocular posterior scleritis presenting as acute conjunctivitis: A case report</td>
<td>Li YZ, Qin XH, Lu JM, Wang YP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5036</td>
<td>Choriocarcinoma with lumbar muscle metastases: A case report</td>
<td>Pang L, Ma XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5042</td>
<td>Primary chondrosarcoma of the liver: A case report</td>
<td>Liu ZY, Jin XM, Yan GH, Jin GY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5057</td>
<td>Rare imaging findings of hypersensitivity pneumonitis: A case report</td>
<td>Wang HJ, Chen XJ, Fan LX, Qi QL, Chen QZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5062</td>
<td>Effective administration of cranial drilling therapy in the treatment of fourth degree temporal, facial and upper limb burns at high altitude: A case report</td>
<td>Shen CM, Li Y, Liu Z, Qi YZ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT COVER

Peer-reviewer of *World Journal of Clinical Cases*, Dr. Aleem Ahmed Khan is a Distinguished Scientist and Head of The Central Laboratory for Stem Cell Research and Translational Medicine, Centre for Liver Research and Diagnostics, Deccan College of Medical Sciences, Kanchanbagh, Hyderabad (India). Dr. Aleem completed his Doctorate from Osmania University, Hyderabad in 1998 and has since performed pioneering work in the treatment of acute liver failure and decompensated cirrhosis using hepatic stem cell transplantation. During his extensive research career he supervised 10 PhD students and published > 150 research articles, 7 book chapters, and 2 patents. His ongoing research involves developing innovative technologies for organ regeneration and management of advanced cancers. (L-Editor: Filipodia)

AIMS AND SCOPE

The primary aim of *World Journal of Clinical Cases* (*WJCC, World J Clin Cases*) is to provide scholars and readers from various fields of clinical medicine with a platform to publish high-quality clinical research articles and communicate their research findings online.

*WJCC* mainly publishes articles reporting research results and findings obtained in the field of clinical medicine and covering a wide range of topics, including case control studies, retrospective cohort studies, retrospective studies, clinical trials studies, observational studies, prospective studies, randomized controlled trials, randomized clinical trials, systematic reviews, meta-analysis, and case reports.

INDEXING/ABSTRACTING

The *WJCC* is now indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded (also known as SciSearch®), Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition, PubMed, and PubMed Central. The 2020 Edition of Journal Citation Reports® cites the 2019 impact factor (IF) for *WJCC* as 1.013; IF without journal self cites: 0.991; Ranking: 120 among 165 journals in medicine, general and internal; and Quartile category: Q3.

RESPONSIBLE EDITORS FOR THIS ISSUE

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Massive gastrointestinal bleeding caused by a Dieulafoy’s lesion in a duodenal diverticulum: A case report

Zhi-Wei He, Ling Zhong, Hui Xu, Hua Shi, Yang-Mei Wang, Xiao-Cong Liu

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Author contributions:
He ZW performed the endoscopy examination; Zhong L performed the endoscopic treatment; Xu H provided guidance during the treatment process; Shi H and Wang YM assisted during the treatment process; Liu XC acquired all data and wrote the manuscript.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND
Dieulafoy’s lesion is a rare vascular abnormality characterized by a small abnormally dilated artery that runs a tortuous course in the submucosa. There is usually no ulcer present in Dieulafoy’s lesions and the overlying mucosa is most often normal. Bleeding caused by a Dieulafoy’s lesion is usually urgent, massive, life-threatening and prone to recurrence. Dieulafoy’s lesions have been reported throughout the digestive tract although the majority of them have been found in the upper digestive tract especially the stomach and duodenum. However, a Dieulafoy’s lesion occurring inside a duodenal diverticulum is very rare.

CASE SUMMARY
A 74-year-old Asian male with epigastric pain, hematemesis and melena was admitted to our clinic. Before admission, the patient had vomited 500 mL of dark red blood, and passed 200 g of black tarry stool. Conservative management was first undertaken as the patient had not been fasting. However, hemorrhage recurred and the patient went into shock. Urgent endoscopy was performed and a diverticulum of 1.8 cm × 1.2 cm × 0.8 cm was found on the anterior wall of the descending duodenum. The diverticulum was covered with a blood clot. After the clot was removed, an artery stump was observed in the diverticulum with a diameter of 2-3 mm. Two titanium hemostatic clips were inserted to clamp the vessel stump. The patient was discharged 7 d post-endoscopy and followed for 6 mo with no recurrence.

CONCLUSION
This case was diagnosed with a Dieulafoy’s lesion inside a duodenal diverticulum which has rarely been reported. Hematemesis was stopped by clamping the vessel stump with titanium clips. No complications occurred.
INTRODUCTION

Dieulafoy’s lesion is a rare vascular abnormality characterized by a small artery with an abnormally dilated caliber that runs a tortuous course in the submucosa. Bleeding is thought to be caused by a submucosal artery causing pressure necrosis of the overlying submucosa and mucosa in the absence of an ulcer. Bleeding caused by Dieulafoy’s lesion is frequently urgent and massive, prone to recurrence, and life-threatening. Dieulafoy’s lesions have been reported throughout the digestive tract, but have rarely been reported inside a duodenal diverticulum. Here, we report a case of massive hematemesis caused by a Dieulafoy’s lesion which was located inside a duodenal diverticulum.

CASE PRESENTATION

Chief complaints
A 74-year-old man was admitted to our clinic with epigastric pain, hematemesis and melena.

History of present illness
The patient complained of epigastric pain for 3 d. One day before he was admitted, the patient had hematemesis consisting of 500 mL of dark red liquid, followed by 200 g of black tarry stool. The patient felt dizzy, weak and had palpitations.

History of past illness
The patient denied a history of hypertension, diabetes, and other relevant illness. He also denied ever taking any medications including non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents, anticoagulants and herbals.

Family history
The patient denied any positive family history.

Physical examination
Upon admission, his temperature was 36.5°C, heart rate was 97 bpm, blood pressure was 100/76 mmHg, and respiration rate was 20 breaths/minute. The patient was conscious, anemic looking, and bowel sounds were active.

Laboratory examinations
Blood analysis revealed an erythrocyte count of 2.92 × 10¹²/L, hemoglobin of 91 g/L,
and platelet count of $152 \times 10^9$/L. Fecal occult blood test was (+). Coagulation test revealed normal prothrombin time and international normalized ratio.

**Imaging examinations**
Abdominal CT scan (no contrast was used) upon admission showed no obvious abnormalities of the liver, gallbladder, biliary tract, spleen and pancreas.

**Treatment upon admission**
After admission, the patient had nothing per os, and received intravenous fluid resuscitation and proton pump inhibitors. As the patient had eaten 2 h before admission, urgent endoscopy was postponed.

**Progression of the disease and further diagnostic work-up**
In the evening, the patient had 2 bouts of melena with a total weight of approximately 600 g, followed by increased heart rate (108 bpm), decreased blood pressure (88/50 mmHg) and hemoglobin (56 g/L). Red blood cell transfusion was given, and then urgent upper gastrointestinal endoscopy was performed. Endoscopy revealed a huge diverticulum (about 1.8 cm × 1.2 cm × 0.8 cm) in the anterior wall of the descending duodenum (close to the papilla) with a massive blood clot inside (Figure 1). A vessel stump with a diameter of 2-3 mm was exposed after removal of the clot (Figure 2).

**FINAL DIAGNOSIS**
The final diagnosis was massive upper gastrointestinal bleeding caused by a Dieulafoy's lesion inside a duodenal diverticulum.

**TREATMENT**
Two titanium clips were inserted to clamp the vessel stump (Figure 3). No active bleeding was observed after washing. Oral feeding with a cool liquid diet was initiated on the 1st day post-endoscopy.

**OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP**
No more hematemesis occurred, and melena stopped 3 d after endoscopy. The patient was discharged from hospital on the 7th day, and followed for 6 mo with no recurrence.

**DISCUSSION**
Dieulafoy’s lesion is a rare cause of digestive tract hemorrhage. It is a rare vascular abnormality characterized by a small abnormally dilated artery that runs a tortuous course in the submucosa[1]. Dieulafoy’s lesions are believed to be congenital, but they have been reported to occur more frequently with advancing age[2]. Dieulafoy’s lesions account for 1%-5.8% of acute gastrointestinal bleeding[3,4], but they often present with urgent and massive bleeding usually leading to shock, and even death. They also have a high rate of recurrence. Sometimes, the bleeding may cease spontaneously due to a drop in blood pressure and/or the formation of a blood clot. The arterial stump may retract and remain hidden beneath the mucosa making it very difficult to detect by endoscopy, or even surgery. Thus, a Dieulafoy’s lesion can be life-threatening.

Endoscopy has been reported to be the most effective method in diagnosing up to 70% of Dieulafoy’s lesions[5]. The endoscopic findings of Dieulafoy’s lesions are characterized by an isolated protruding vessel usually surrounded by normal mucosa or less commonly a small round or oval superficial ulcer[6]. The diameter of the vessel stump is usually between 1-3 mm[7]. The lesion may be actively bleeding including spurting or oozing, otherwise, it might be covered by a blood clot[5].

Dieulafoy’s lesions have been reported throughout the digestive tract with 8% in the esophagus, 71% in the stomach, 15% in the duodenum, 1% in the intestine, 2% in the colon, 2% in the rectum and 1% in gastric anastomosis[8]. Santos reported a case of a Dieulafoy’s lesion located in the gallbladder in 2020[9]. It is also reported that
Dieulafoy’s lesions have been found outside the gastrointestinal tract, such as in the bronchus\textsuperscript{[8, 9]}. However, Dieulafoy’s lesions occurring inside a duodenum diverticulum are rare, with only 4 cases reported previously\textsuperscript{[10-13]}. In the current case, the diverticulum was located in the descending duodenum where lesions are difficult to observe. There were no signs of inflammation or ulcer in the diverticulum, and the only clue was the blood clot. The exposed arterial stump could easily have been missed if the endoscopist had ignored the clot or did not wash away the clot to observe the inside of the diverticulum.

Due to urgent, massive, arterial bleeding, it is often difficult to stop the hemorrhage using common conservative therapies. Treatment by endoscopy has become the preferred and most effective way of managing a Dieulafoy’s lesion, with a reported success rate of over 90\textsuperscript{[3]}. Commonly used endoscopic hemostatic procedures include...
electrocoagulation, thermocoagulation, local epinephrine injection, sclerotherapy, banding, and hemoclips\(^\text{[7,14]}\). Mechanical hemostasis is considered to be more effective than injection or thermal treatment\(^\text{[14]}\), and hemoclips are easier to manipulate compared to banding. The clips close the vessel stump, and a subsequent inflammation reaction forms granulation tissue which seals off the vessel. The clips fall off after 1-3 wk.

**CONCLUSION**

We report the case of an adult patient with massive hemorrhage of the digestive tract caused by a Dieulafoy’s lesion inside a duodenal diverticulum discovered and treated by endoscopy. Hemostasis was achieved by endoscopic placement of hemostatic clips. There were no complications. The patient was followed for 6 mo without recurrence.

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associations and endobronchial ablative management. *Medicine (Baltimore)* 2018; 97: e9754 [PMID: 29465555 DOI: 10.1097/MD.0000000000009754]


