Intrahepatic and periduodenal embolization: New technique for Protein-Losing Enteropathy treatment in congenital heart disease patients

Ari J Gartenberg MD, Ganesh Krishnamurthy MD, Abhay Srivivasan MD, Fernando A. Escobar MD, Jefferson N Brown MD, Petar Mamula MD, Aaron G Dewitt MD, David M Biko MD, Erin M Pinto CRNP, Matthew J Gillespie MD, Michael L O'Byrne MD MSCE, Jonathan J Rome MD, Yoav Dori MD PhD, Christopher L Smith MD PhD

Background

Protein-losing enteropathy (PLE) treatment is primarily symptomatic management to reduce fluid overload and electrolyte disturbances. Liver lymphatics are a mediator of PLE pathogenesis and their embolization has shown varying success with some patients having minimal or no improvement.

Objectives

This study sought to describe extrathoracic causes of PLE using MR lymphangiography and evaluate the outcomes of a combined intrahepatic and periduodenal lymphatic embolization strategy for PLE treatment.

Methods

This was a single-center, retrospective review of imaging and medical records of the first 10 consecutive patients with congenital heart disease previously surgically palliated and complicated by PLE who underwent isolated lymphatic intervention using both intrahepatic and periduodenal lymphatic embolization at our institution.

Results

- Twelve lymphatic interventions were performed in 10 patients.
- Intrahepatic and intranodal MR lymphangiography was performed in all procedures and intramesenteric in five.
- Duodenal leaks were identified from intrahepatic and/or intramesenteric access in all patients.
- Endoscopy with injection of isosulfan blue in hepatic or periduodenal lymphatics confirmed leak in 11/12 procedures.
- Glue embolization of hepatic portoperitoneal lymphatics was performed followed by targeted embolization of periduodenal lymphatics.
- All patients responded to a single intervention with symptom improvement and albumin ≥3g/dL (median 15d, IQR 6-20) (Central Figure).
- Most common post-procedure complication was transient pancreatitis in 75% (9/12) of patients, followed by hyperbilirubinemia in 33% (4/12); both either improved or resolved by the time of discharge or transfer.
- Longer-term follow-up (median 68d, range 111-1054) identified two populations, complete responders (n=5) with either a slow or more acute decline (<5 months) in albumin (Figure 1). (A) Complete responders with normalization of albumin and no recurrence at time of last follow up. (B) Incomplete responders with initial normalization of albumin, but with a variable decline before recurrence of PLE. (C) Initial responders but with more acute decline and PLE recurrence (within 6 months).

Conclusions

The authors demonstrate additional sources of PLE and describe a new technique targeting both the hepatic lymphatic source and periduodenal destination to treat PLE.

This comprehensive strategy led to an initial improvement of albumin levels in all patients and sustained albumin levels in 50% of patients with a single intervention.

References


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Contact Information

The Cardiac Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Ari Gartenberg MD
40th Street & Civic Center Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA 19134
T: 215-596-4040
E: ari.gartenberg@chop.edu