



SCROTAL PEARL IN CHRONIC HYDROCELE: A RARE CASE ENTITY

Surgery

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Scrotal pearl or scrotal calculus are benign micro-calcifications in the extratesticular scrotum found incidentally during ultrasonography, operation or on clinical examination if the size is large. The aetiology and pathogenesis are unclear but linked to repeated micro-trauma due to injury, inflammation, infections by parasites and long-standing chronic hydroceles. They are usually of no clinical significance and do not change patient management. Incidence is between 1-5%. **Aims And Objectives:** The study aims to discuss a rare presentation of chronic hydrocele.

Objectives:

- Discuss the aetiologies and management of scrotal pearl in chronic hydrocele.

Methods: We will be discussing a case of scrotal pearl in chronic hydrocele. **Results:** The differential diagnosis of calcified intratesticular lesion should be ruled out. **Conclusion:** Scrotal pearls are rare, with limited literature hence making it an interesting case for discussion and learning.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Scrotal pearl or scrotal calculus are rare benign incidental extratesticular calcifications within the scrotum. They are freely floating or located lying between the potential space of the tunica vaginalis or the sinus of epididymis of the testes. It's a rare discovery with a reported incidence ranging between 1-5% [1].

CASE REPORT

A 58 y/o male presented with the chief complaint of swelling in the scrotal region for 7 years with increased pain on/off over the swelling since the last one year. The swelling was insidious in onset, initially small in size and gradually progressing in size over the years, there is no increase in size on standing/walking/strenuous exercises or decrease in size on lying down. No history of any comorbidities. No history of any trauma. On examination, there is a visible swelling on the right hemiscrotum which does not show expansile impulse on coughing. On palpation, there is no local tenderness or rise in temperature, it is possible to get above the swelling. It is soft, cystic with a smooth surface and rounded margins, fluctuation and trans illumination positive with no palpable expansive impulse on coughing. Testes are not palpable separately. Intraoperative findings showed a 1*1 cm sized calculi, hard in consistency after draining the hydrocele fluid (Fig.1). Specimen sent for histopathology suggested scrotolith composed of carbonate apatite (Fig.2). Patient recovered from procedure uneventfully.



Fig.1: Intraoperative picture of scrotal pearl



Fig.2: Sample sent for histopathology

DISCUSSION

In 1935, Kichham was the first to describe an intrascrotal calculus as a "fibrinoid loose body" or "scrotal pearl" [1,2]. Clinically these calculi are asymptomatic, usually, the stones are less than 1 cm in size but can be more significant as well found incidentally during surgery. The etiopathogenesis of this disease is unclear and is linked to injury and inflammation from repeated microtrauma to the scrotal region e.g. mountain bikers, necrosis, filarial parasites, crystallisation of the hydrocele fluid in chronic hydrocele. These calculi may also develop from remnants of the appendix testis or appendix of epididymis after torsion and become freely movable in the hydrocele fluid. Ultrasonography is the investigation of choice showing movement of hyper echogenic lesion in the fluid between the tunica vaginalis with posterior acoustic shadow showing a 'comet tail' artefact. The stones are usually composed of carbonate apatite or magnesium ammonium phosphate. They are usually of no clinical significance. The Differential diagnosis of extra-testicular calcific lesions includes epididymal calcification and sperm granuloma [3]. In our case the calculus was found incidentally during surgery with thickened and adherent tunica signifying inflammation which might be the underlying aetiology of the formation of calculus. Although its detection in hydrocele does not change the treatment, the suspicion of a tumour needs to be ruled out, if the stone is adherent to the tunica.

CONCLUSION

Scrotal pearls are rare, with limited literature hence making it an interesting case for discussion and learning.

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