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Intussusception: Common diagnosis with an uncommon presentation

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Intussusception occurs when a portion of the alimentary tract is telescoped into an adjacent segment. It is the most common cause of intestinal obstruction between five months and 3 years of age. In typical cases, there is a sudden onset in a previously well child, of severe colicky pain. Other commons symptoms are vomiting, normal stool for first few hours, then reducing in size until no defecation. Stool can also contain red blood and mucus. In approximately 70% of cases oblong mass can be palpated in the abdomen. But sometimes those common symptoms can occur later or are absent, which can leads to a totally differential diagnosis. Previously, two healthy unrelated children presented to the emergency room via an ambulance. Patient Z (7-months-old, male) was hospitalized in severe condition with reduced level of consciousness (Glasgow Coma Scale - 6) and sudden heart rate drop requiring admission to the pediatric intensive care unit. Computer tomography scan of the head demonstrated no abnormality. Diagnosis of intussusception was made later by palpation of abdominal mass and ultrasound scan. Patient L (2-year-old, male) presented lethargic after having had liquid stool and little bit of fresh blood from rectum. He also had emesis in ER and had positive meningeal signs. Lumbar puncture did not confirm meningitis; however intussusception was discovered on abdominal ultrasound. Altered mental status as primary presenting symptom is not common in cases of intussusception. These cases demonstrate that intussusception should be considered as differential and emphasize need for thorough clinical examination in child with low level of consciousness

Biography

Polina Popeiko is a 5th year Pediatrics Program Student. She is a Leader of Pediatrics Student Interest Group at Riga Stradinsh University, and also Volunteers at Children's Clinical University Hospital, Gastroenterology Department. She organizes social project called "Knowing and Safe", that aims to educate children and adults about children's safety and first aid.

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