

Clinical Image

Speckled Duodenum – A Rare Case of Pseudomelanosis Duodeni

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75-year-old ventilator-dependent female with chronic respiratory failure, stroke, gastrostomy tube and a mechanical aortic valve on coumadin presented with anemia secondary to melena. Esophagogastroduodenoscopy [1] performed didn't reveal the source of bleeding but showed an abnormal speckled brown pigmentation of the duodenal bulb extending down past the second portion (Figure 1). Duodenal biopsies showed chronic inflammation, foveolar metaplasia and Brunner's gland hyperplasia (Figure 2). Brown pigment in duodenal villous macrophages was negative for iron on Prussian blue stains.

Pseudomelanosis Duodeni (PD) [2] is a rare, benign condition described in 1976 by Bisordi and Kleinman. Endoscopically, it appears as discrete speckled brown or black areas of hyperpigmentation in the duodenal villi, usually in females aged >60 years. Cause is unknown. Histological manifestation is due to deposition of ferrous sulfide pigment in the lysosomes of mucosal macrophages within the lamina propria. PD is more common in patients, with chronic illnesses, as in our patient.

References

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Figure 1: Speckled brown areas of hyperpigmentation in the proximal duodenum.

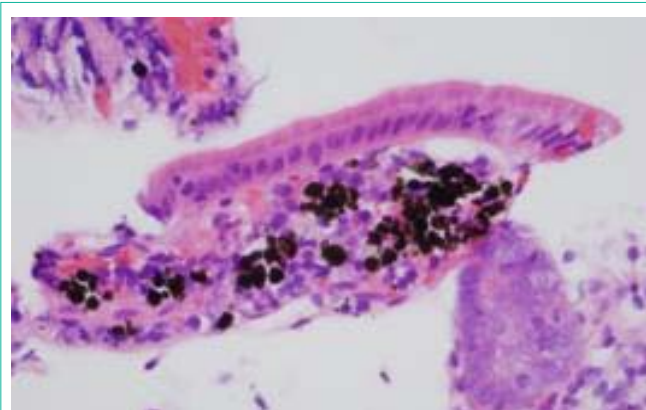


Figure 2: Hematoxylin and eosin stain illustrating macrophages laden with brown pigment in the lamina propria of duodenal mucosa.