



Veiled Right Kidney Sign in Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography



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Introduction

A 76-year-old female underwent Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) for symptomatic choledocolithiasis. Biliary cannulation was achieved only after pancreatic guidewire placement. Cholangiogram showed several calculi in the common bile duct (CBD). Biliary sphincterectomy was performed, followed by biliary drainage with basket and balloon, resulting in extraction of multiple stones. Complete clearance was not possible and a 10Fr x 10cm plastic stent was placed. During the procedure, a radiolucent halo around the right kidney was noted at fluoroscopy (Fig. 1). This finding, known as the veiled right kidney sign, is suggestive of air in the retroperitoneal cavity due to duodenal perforation and, therefore, the procedure was interrupted.

This patient was managed conservatively with nil per mouth, nasogastric suction, intravenous fluids, antibiotics and analgesics. The patient had a rapid clinical and radiological improvement and was discharged 7 days after the procedure.

ERCP has become an important therapeutic modality for biliary and pancreatic disorders. ERCP-related perforation is a serious complication and although rare, it is associated with significant mortality that can be as high as 37.5% [1]. Early diagnosis and treatment have been shown to improve prognosis and decrease the need for surgery. Most perforations can be diagnosed during ERCP by X-ray fluoroscopy [1, 2].

The veiled right kidney sign was first described in 1996 and refers to the appearance of a "veil" over the right kidney due to accumulation of air in the pararenal space [3]. Although infrequent, this is an early and typical sign of retroperitoneal perforation and should be sought in every ERCP.

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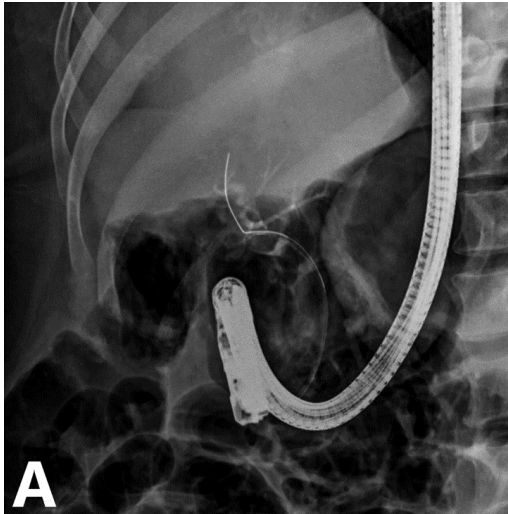


Fig. 1. Fluoroscopy showing a discrete collection of air around the kidney during ERCP.

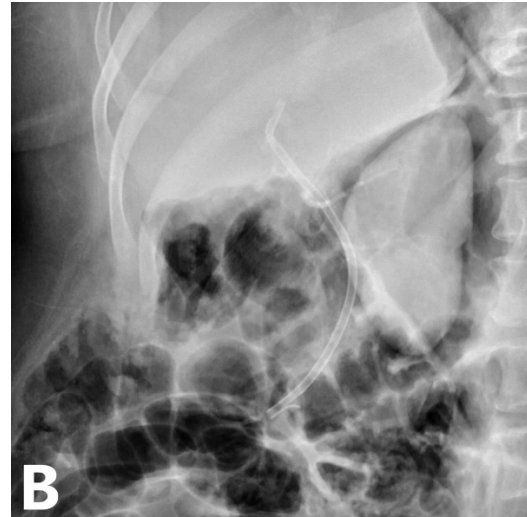


Fig. 2. Fluoroscopy showing the "veiled right kidney sign", characterized by air collection around the kidney. A biliary stent was placed in the common bile duct.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

The authors have complied with the ethical standards and current ethical guidelines

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Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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